

Sight & Sound



THE GREATEST FILMS OF ALL TIME

THE RESULTS OF OUR CELEBRATED POLLS

With Martin Scorsese, Quentin Tarantino, David Thomson, Bong Joon-ho, Michael Mann, Manohla Dargis, Francis Ford Coppola, Laura Mulvey, Béla Tarr, Woody Allen, Slavoj Žižek, Mike Leigh and many others
Plus, in the new look S&S: *Simon Callow on 'F for Fake', Miquel Gomes on 'Tabu'*

The **Masters of Cinema** Series

Rumble Fish

A FILM BY

FRANCIS FORD COPPOLA

Matt Dillon Dennis Hopper
Mickey Rourke Nicolas Cage
Diane Lane Chris Penn

Francis Ford Coppola's dazzling vision of youthful passion and melancholy, esteemed by many to be the director's greatest film after *The Godfather* and *Apocalypse Now* — and his most personal.

TWO CLASSIC FILMS ON BLU-RAY!
AVAILABLE 27th AUGUST 2012

RUMBLE FISH ALSO AVAILABLE IN A LIMITED EDITION STEELBOOK!
ROGOPAG AVAILABLE AS DUAL FORMAT (BLU-RAY + DVD), and DVD EDITIONS



Conceived by the legendary Italian producer Alfredo Bini, the multi-director portmanteau film *Let's Wash Our Brains: RoGoPaG* [*Laviamoci il cervello: RoGoPaG*] brought together four esteemed European directors to contribute comic episodes reflective of the swinging post-"boom" era. The resulting omnibus collectively examines social anxieties around sex, nuclear war, religion, urbanisation – and the promise of a modern cinema.



4 STORIES BY 4 AUTHORS

LET'S WASH OUR BRAINS:



Full details at: mastersofcinema.org

COMING SOON: OEDIPUS REX • CLEOPATRA •

DAS TESTAMENT DES DR. MABUSE • DIE NIBELUNGEN • PARK ROW

All available from:

amazon.co.uk

Welcome



Here it is, the revamped Sight & Sound. As the first image for our new look we've chosen this still from Wong Kar-Wai's 'In the Mood for Love'. What you're probably most eager to see are the results of our critics' and directors' 'Greatest Films' polls (see p.39 and 62) but let me suggest you take your time getting there, because there's so much that we hope to distract you with on the pages in between. Wong's film hasn't won either poll, but the critics have made it the highest placed from the 21st century. And since the new films we're featuring – 'Tabu' (p.24) and 'Berberian Sound Studio' (P.32) – both expound a nostalgia for analogue cinema, it seems right to have an image that's contemporary and retro (in that the film is set in the 1960s). Love and magic are on our minds, not least because of the rerelease of Orson Welles's study of trickery 'F for Fake', celebrated here by Simon Callow (p.28). But is that all Welles has to celebrate? Soon you'll know.

Nick James

EXPERIENCE THE BEST OF CINEMA ON BLU-RAY

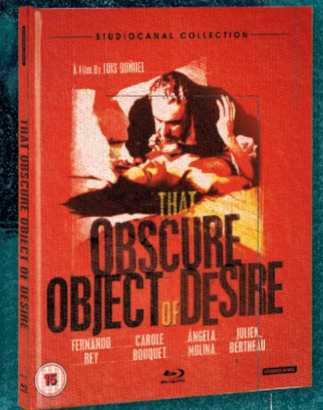
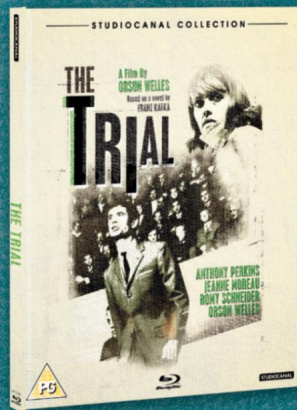
StudioCanal expands its new top of the range STUDIOCANAL COLLECTION with new titles on Blu-Ray.

Digitally remastered originals of award-winning, critically acclaimed films with brand-new bonus features and unique packaging.

Discover or rediscover the great classics, contemporary works and adaptation from literary masterpieces.

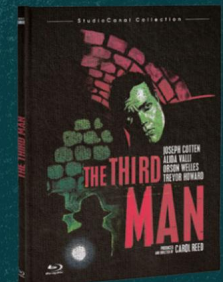
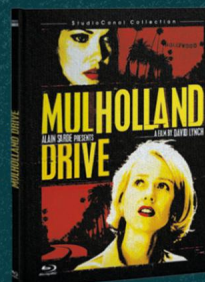
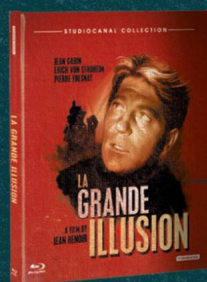
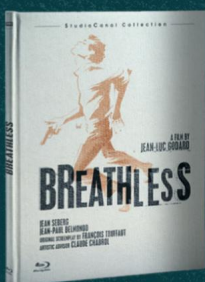


NEW TO BLU-RAY



RELEASED SEPTEMBER 3RD

ALSO AVAILABLE



ORDER NOW

amazon.co.uk



Cover feature The 2012 Critics' Poll

Once a decade we ask critics to select the Greatest Films of All Time. This year 846 of them responded. We unveil the Top 100, plus 100 personal top tens from David Thomson, Camille Paglia, J. Hoberman, Mark Kermode and others...

REGULARS

7 **Editorial** What's new?

22 **Reader Offers**

Rushes

8 **Hannah McGill** on the allure of smoking in the movies

11 **David Jenkins** talks to director David Robert Mitchell about his debut *The Myth of the American Sleepover*

12 **Mark Cousins** praises Asian cinema

13 **Catherine Bray** pays tribute to screenwriter Nora Ephron

15 **Jonathan Romney** decodes an image from *Mission: Impossible Ghost Protocol*

The Industry

16 **Charles Gant** explores the troubled production history of *On the Road*

17 **Charles Gant** assesses Steven

Soderbergh's box-office performance

18 **David Locke** explores how live alternative content is affecting cinemas

21 **Geoffrey Macnab** talks to the new head of the BFI Film Fund, Ben Roberts

Wide Angle

72 **Sophie Mayer** on Tate Modern's new space for live performance and film

74 **Laura Mulvey** pays tribute to experimental filmmaker Stephen Dwoskin

75 **Gabe Klinger** celebrates the depth and breadth of the FIDMarseille film festival

76 **Frances Morgan** reconsiders three Ennio Morricone scores for Dario Argento

77 **Bryony Dixon** assesses the contemporary state of silent cinema

78 **Kim Newman** revisits some classic Mexican sci-fi

FEATURES

24

White mischief

Tabu moves from modern-day Lisbon to a rapturous evocation of romance in colonial Africa. But no plot description can do justice to the idiosyncratic poetry of director Miguel Gomes. He talks to **Mar Diestro-Dópido**

28

Hey presto

The 1970s have been seen as a period of frustration for Orson Welles. But, says Welles biographer **Simon Callow**, the same period saw his invention of the essay film with the brilliant *F for Fake*

32

The art of noise

Director Peter Strickland follows his breakthrough *Katalin Varga* with a bold step into the world of analogue sound and Italian horror, *Berberian Sound Studio*. He talks to **Jason Wood**
PLUS Geoffrey Macnab talks to Toby Jones about his role as a sound engineer

62

The 2012 Directors' Poll

The Greatest Films of All Time, as chosen by 358 directors including Woody Allen, Nuri Bilge Ceylan, Quentin Tarantino, the Dardenne brothers, Terence Davies, Guillermo del Toro, Martin Scorsese, Michael Mann, Samantha Morton...

79 **Brad Stevens** asks if there's a difference between 'best' films and 'favourite' ones

Forum

80 **Henry K. Miller** and **Hannah McGill** go head to head over the relevance of cinematic canons

82 Letters

Reading *The Dark Knight*, the genius of *Death Watch*, and music in *Moonrise Kingdom*






Opens




3rd August











OFFICIAL SELECTION
LONDON
FILM FESTIVAL

WINNER
SILVER BEAR
BEST SCREENPLAY
BERLIN INTERNATIONAL
FILM FESTIVAL

OFFICIAL SELECTION
TORONTO
INTERNATIONAL
FILM FESTIVAL

A FILM BY JOSHUA MARSTON
THE DIRECTOR OF THE OSCAR®-NOMINATED
MARIA FULL OF GRACE

THE FORGIVENESS OF BLOOD

AN ACCOMPLISHED AND
SUSPENSFUL DRAMA

KNOCKOUT PERFORMANCES

IN CINEMAS
AUGUST 10



(incorporating Monthly Film Bulletin)
Published monthly by the BFI

Editorial enquiries

21 Stephen Street London W1T 1LN
t: 020 7255 1444
f: 020 7580 5830
w: bfi.org.uk/sightandsound
e: S&S@bfi.org.uk

Social media

f: facebook.com/SightSoundmag
t: twitter.com/SightSoundmag

Subscriptions

t: 020 8955 7070
e: sightandsound@alliance-media.co.uk
Volume 22 Issue 9 (NS)
ISSN 0037-4806 USPS 496-040

CONTRIBUTORS

Catherine Bray is the editor of *Film4.com*

Edward Buscombe is the author of the BFI Screen Guide '100 Westerns'

Simon Callow is at work on the third volume of his Orson Welles biography, 'Orson Welles: Something Like a Magician', to be published by Jonathan Cape

Mark Cousins is a critic and filmmaker

Sam Davies is a freelance writer

Tony Earnshaw is the author of 'Beating the Devil: The Making of Night of the Demon'

Charles Gant is film editor at 'Heat' magazine

David Jenkins is reviews editor at 'Little White Lies'

Trevor Johnston writes on film for 'Time Out' and the Script Factory, and is a script consultant for funding bodies and production companies

Hannah McGill is a freelance writer and critic

Henry K. Miller is the author of an essay for the booklet accompanying the BFI DVD 'The Soviet Influence: From Turksib to Night Mail'

Frances Morgan is deputy editor of *The Wire*

Lisa Mullen is a freelance writer and critic

Kim Newman's latest novel is 'Professor Moriarty The Hound of the d'Urbervilles'

Jonathan Romney is the film critic at the 'Independent on Sunday'

Brad Stevens is the author of 'Abel Ferrara: The Moral Vision'

COVER

Lorenzo Petrantoni
www.lorenzopetrantoni.com

NEXT ISSUE

on sale 11 September

Contents Reviews

FILMS OF THE MONTH

- 86 Berberian Sound Studio
- 88 The Dark Knight Rises
- 90 The Imposter
- 92 Tabu

FILMS

- 94 Ai Weiwei: Never Sorry
- 94 The Amazing Spider-Man
- 95 The Bird/L'Oiseau
- 96 Bol Bachchan
- 97 Brave
- 97 Circumstance
- 98 The Devil's Business
- 99 The Dinosaur Project
- 99 A Few Best Men
- 100 The Forgiveness of Blood/La faida
- 101 Ice Age: Continental Drift
- 101 In The Dark Half
- 102 Jackpot/Arme Riddere
- 103 Lawless
- 104 Leave It on the Floor
- 104 Lola Versus
- 106 Love
- 107 The Man Inside
- 107 Offender
- 108 Petit Nicolas/Le Petit Nicolas
- 108 The Queen of Versailles
- 109 Salute
- 110 Samsara
- 111 Shadow Dancer
- 112 Step Up: Miami Heat/Step Up: Revolution
- 112 Take This Waltz
- 113 That's My Boy
- 114 The Three Stooges
- 114 360
- 115 Truth or Dare
- 115 The Wedding Video
- 116 The Women on the 6th Floor/Les Femmes du 6ème étage

HOME CINEMA

- 122 Amicus Films
- 122 The Big Trail
- 122 The Children's Film Foundation Collection: Volume 1 – London Tales
- 128 Dixon of Dock Green
- 124 Jean Grémillon During the Occupation
- 125 Jaws
- 128 Lost Empires
- 125 The Most Dangerous Game/Gow the Headhunter (Cannibal Island)
- 125 Films by Pier Paolo Pasolini
- 126 They Made Me a Fugitive
- 126 Things to Come
- 127 Through the Weeping Glass: On the Consolations of Life Everlasting (Limbo & Afterbreezes in the Mütter Museum)
- 128 Undermind
- 127 Wonderful London
- DVD features**
- 120 **Tony Earnshaw** is thrilled by a collection of BBC ghost stories from the 1970s
- 123 **Tim Lucas** unearths a camped-up curio about a small-town sex addict

BOOKS

- 130 **Edward Buscombe** charts the history of the BFI Film Classics series
- 132 **Sue Vice** welcomes an anthology of essays about Alain Resnais's *Night and Fog*
- 133 **Nick Roddick** salutes an attempt to map the boundaries of cinema in the aftermath of the digital revolution
- 133 **Philip Kemp** enjoys a witty history of the Hollywood sign



And online this month All the data from our complete Greatest Films of All Time poll, with all 846 critics' entries available to browse from 15 August bfi.org.uk/sightsoundpoll2012

**THE GREATEST
FRENCH FILM OF ALL TIME
COMES TO BLU-RAY AND
DVD IN ALL ITS
RESTORED GLORY.**



AVAILABLE 17.09.12

ON  AND 

SPECIAL FEATURES

- **'Theatre, Love and War: Making Les Enfants du Paradis'**
A new documentary on the making of *Les Enfants du Paradis* and the collaboration of director Marcel Carné, writer Jacques Prévert and production designer Alexandre Trauner. (55 mins)
- **'Once Upon a Time...Les Enfants du Paradis'** (52 mins)
- **The Restoration**
- **Restoration – Before and After**

EDITORIAL

Editor

Nick James

Deputy editor

Kieron Corless

Features editor

James Bell

Web editor

Nick Bradshaw

Production editor

Isabel Stevens

Chief sub-editor

John Wrathall

Sub-editors

Jane Lamacraft

Jamie McLeish

Researchers

Mar Diestro-Dópidio

Bethany Rutter

Credits supervisor

Patrick Fahy

Credits associate

Kevin Lyons

Design and art direction

chrisbrowndesign.com

Origination

Rhapsody Media

Printer

Wyndham Group

BUSINESS

Publisher

Rob Winter

Publishing coordinator

Brenda Fernandes

Advertising consultant

Ronnie Hackston

Tel: 020 7957 8916

Mobile: 07799 605 212

Fax: 020 7436 2327

Email: ronnie.hackston@bfi.org.uk

Newsstand distribution

Comag Specialist

Tel: 01895 433800

Bookshop distribution

Central Books

Tel: 020 8986 4854

Sight & Sound (ISSN 0037-4806) is published monthly by British Film Institute, 21 Stephen Street, London W1T 1LN and distributed in the USA by Mail Right Int., 1637 Stelton Road B4, Piscataway, NJ 08854. Periodicals Postage Paid at Piscataway, NJ and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Sight & Sound c/o Mail Right International Inc. 1637 Stelton Road B4, Piscataway NJ 08854.

Subscription office:

For subscription queries and sales of back issues and binders contact: Subscription Department, Sight & Sound, Alliance Media PO Box 2068, Bournehall House Bournehall Road, Bushey WD23 3ZF Tel: 020 8955 7070 Fax: 020 8421 8244 Email: sightandsound@alliance-media.co.uk

Annual subscription rates: UK £45, Eire and ROW £68 £10 discount for BFI members



Copyright © BFI, 2012

The contents of this magazine may not be used or reproduced without the written permission of the publishers. The BFI is a charity, (registration number 287780), registered at 21 Stephen St. London, W1T 1LN



Editorial Nick James



WHAT'S NEW?

Never mind the 'Greatest Films' polls (the results of which you'll find later in the magazine), I want to introduce you here to the new *Sight & Sound* you have in your hand. Hopefully, by the time you've got round to this editorial (having no doubt spent ages scouring the top tens), you'll like the look and feel of the magazine and be enjoying the many ways our designer Christopher Brawn has made it sharper, cleaner and more pleasurable to read. You may also have noticed that the page size is slightly smaller, but that articles are given more room to breathe and that the mag feels more substantial because it has more pages.

For those who've read the first digital edition, the experience may be yet more startling still. We've had this in mind for so long we can't quite believe it's here. One reason why we had to take our time is that we've been preparing our new archive of all the back issues of *Sight & Sound* and the *Monthly Film Bulletin* in a page-turning digital form. Subscribers who choose to add access to this archive will, we hope, exult in the ease with which they can browse through the magazine's entire legacy of film commentary across the 80 years during which it has been published.

In all the dazzle of the polls and/or the new digital offerings, you may not yet have come across the three new sections in the magazine, The Industry, Wide Angle and Forum – or noticed the refreshment of our regular upfront Rushes section. The title of The Industry section speaks for itself, but for us it's the most delicate of the new elements, since it stretches our scope in a new direction (though you will find Charles Gant's regular 'The Numbers' column and our usual 'In Production' listings there). The Industry contains a new column called 'How It Works' that sets out to demystify the reasons why what's on at our cinemas happens to be there, and why other choices are not, plus a regular 'Profile' of a significant figure at the business end of film, and a 'Development Tale' of a film that's had a remarkable journey from inception to screen. The thinking behind this developing section is for *Sight & Sound* to become a more essential read for those in the business of making films. It will evolve further so, watch that space.

As you'll probably have guessed, the Forum is the site for controversy and debate, so we've moved the readers' letters page there to encourage dialogue between readers over the issues covered within. Each month a polemical argument will be featured: either a for-and-against tussle (such as the one about the film canon this month, see p.80) or a round-table discussion, or a reappraisal by someone who's changed their mind. Rushes has been reconditioned to give a more welcoming sense of the fun in cinephilia. New columns from Mark

For those who've read the first digital edition, the experience may be more startling still – we've had this in mind so long we can't quite believe it's here



Cousins ('Dispatches'), Hannah McGill ('Object Lessons') and Jonathan Romney ('Image Capture') sit alongside recommendations, fun lists, obituaries and a 'First Sight' page to introduce new talent. In future issues a new historical quarterly series called 'Deep Focus' will explore a theme, tendency, genre or national cinema over many pages – and will eventually form an in-depth overview of film history from the medium's inception through to the present day.

Wide Angle is a special, looser section created to include all that's at the margins of the moving image, from artist's film and video to transmedia to strange far-flung events and little-known adventures in genre. Frances Morgan's new 'Soundings' column about music and other soundtracks and Brad Stevens's explorations of cinema's backwaters – 'Bradlands' – are there, and the Wide Angle section as a whole is likely to evolve in ways as yet unseen, including more frequent coverage of the more visual aspects of cinema.

One thing we've changed in terms of this magazine's history as a journal of record is to create a lead review section of four films that precedes the alphabetical listing of other reviews. This is to give due prominence to the films we think matter most in any given month, without losing touch with the comprehensiveness of our coverage. We feel that such a move towards further recommendation makes sense in such an overcrowded marketplace for cinema releases.

All these new elements in *Sight & Sound* are mostly additional to what we were doing already. We haven't ripped up the magazine and started again – you'll find most of your favourite items have been retained – but we have looked harder at what we could do better and tried to bring in coverage of aspects of the moving image we've paid too little attention to. Perhaps the most helpful thing we've done concerns our digital edition. As the self-proclaimed International Film Magazine – aware of how much an issue can cost abroad because of postage – we've priced digital overseas subscriptions substantially lower than print (see p.23 for details).

Putting together this new *Sight & Sound* at the same time as gathering in the votes and comments of hundreds of critics and directors around the world for the 'Greatest Films' polls has been a gargantuan effort by the team, all of whom I salute. We welcome all constructive feedback to the usual S&S@bfi.org.uk email address. In the meantime, please drink deep at your leisure.

ILLUSTRATION BY ANDY WATT

OBJECT LESSONS

MRS ROBINSON'S CIGARETTE

The first column in a new series about the significance of objects in the cinema considers a key prop from *The Graduate*

By Hannah McGill

The animal-print underwear speaks for itself. Ash-blond streaks at once connote greying follicles and a luxe beauty regime. Graphic tan lines emphasise just how long it's been since she was snow white, and how much she's exposed herself in the interim. But nothing captures the physical jadedness of Mrs Robinson in Mike Nichols's *The Graduate* – or the sexual superfluity of her young prey, Benjamin Braddock – like the lungload of smoke that he traps in her mouth while attempting their first kiss. He locks lips and stands horribly motionless, more like a baby latching on to the breast than a would-be lover. She lets this grisly non-embrace play out, and when he frees her, exhales. It's not only a neatly comedic moment, but a bluntly symbolic one that prefigures the non-intimate intimacy in which they're about to engage. Mrs Robinson is polluted, actively and overtly. She's already been penetrated. More than that, she's already full.

By the time of *The Graduate*'s release in 1967, the cigarette as sexual signifier in cinema was nothing new. After all, a tubular object that's inserted into an orifice – there to be struck alight and then used up – hardly has to exert itself in order to be a phallic symbol; and the convention that the act of smoking can bookend a sexual encounter – from "Got a light?" to post-coital indulgence – adds an additional frisson.

Throughout the popular rise of smoking in the early part of the 20th century, cigarette manufacturers endeavoured to link their products with wholesomeness (and even with health benefits); but by the flapper era, smoking and female sexual licentiousness had already forged a firm alliance. In *The Plastic Age*, the 1925 film that propelled her to superstardom, the negative influence of Clara Bow's fun-loving flapper on Donald Keith's respectable, athletic freshman is clearly signposted when he takes up smoking and



No smoke without fire: Anne Bancroft's Mrs Robinson has been symbolically polluted and penetrated



Jeff Keen at The Tanks, Tate Modern

The recently deceased experimental filmmaker made an installation especially for the new spaces of The Tanks: Live Programme that, we're promised, will draw on "his radical development of expanded cinema, cut-up soundtracks and unruly live action".



'The Passion of Joan of Arc' on Blu-ray

Masters of Cinema's forthcoming dual-format DVD and Blu-ray of Carl Theodor Dreyer's 1927 masterpiece reportedly boasts a new HD restoration drawn from a Danish print, which includes rarely seen original Danish-language intertitles. Available from 12 Nov.



consequently disgraces himself on the running track. True love calms her down in the end, but the correlation between sexual freedom and smoking has been made clear nonetheless.

Combining as it did decadent nocturnal pleasures and outdoorsy, exuberant physical fitness, the flapper image created an ambiguity around the use of tobacco by women on which advertisers still capitalise today. Smoking might damage your body and even sully your reputation, but choosing to do it affirms that you're free. And once you've embraced one pleasure in which your mother would not have been permitted to indulge, why not explore others...? No wonder smoking has tended to step in as a screen substitute for sex whenever moral restrictions clamp down (most famously in that smoke-wreathed love scene between Bette Davis and Paul Henreid in 1942's *Now, Voyager*).

Just before his 21st birthday, Mrs Robinson tells Benjamin that she's twice his age. She would have been born, therefore, at the height of the flapper era, and come of age at the end of the war. In the US, 1964 had seen the release of surgeon general Luther Terry's 'Advisory Committee Report on Smoking and Health', which linked smoking with lung cancer, emphysema and other diseases; restrictive legislation followed, including mandatory health warnings on cigarette packets. Mrs Robinson would, however, have been congratulated by the slogan of the Philip Morris brand Virginia Slims in 1968 for having "come a long way, baby". If flappers had been characterised as kids and babies – trying everything out of sheer enthusiasm – the female smoker of the late 1960s had completed

Smoking has tended to step in as a screen substitute for sex whenever moral restrictions clamp down

an endurance test to get where she was. The sexual connotations of smoking therefore became less about carefree indulgence and more about the appeal of an experienced, even sexually jaded woman. "Sophisticated?" in the words of *The Great Gatsby*'s Daisy Buchanan. "God, I'm sophisticated..."

Anne Bancroft, who played Mrs Robinson at 35 opposite a 30-year-old Dustin Hoffman as Benjamin, still shows up on those lists of 'female smokers' that please fetishists in shady corners of the internet. Rated highly on such lists is Sarah Jessica Parker, whose 35-ish single woman Carrie Bradshaw fronted HBO's hit series *Sex and the City*. As the show grew in popularity, Bradshaw's smoking – a key element of her jaded hipster cred in the source column and book by Candace Bushnell – was stripped away; America's sweetheart, though she be ever so foul-mouthed, sexually active and financially independent, couldn't be seen to smoke.

In *The Graduate*, Mrs Robinson certainly comes across as a sexier option than her good-girl daughter Elaine (Benjamin, as Roger Ebert puts it, "gets a chance to sleep with the ranking babe in his neighborhood, and throws it away in order to marry her dorky daughter"). But the cynicism, self-destructiveness and sexual knowingness symbolised by her smoking are still an onscreen fire risk.

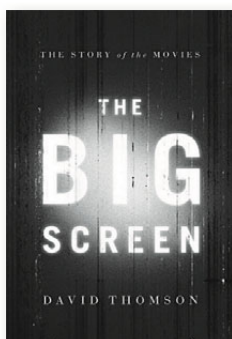


Clara Bow



'Now, Voyager'

David Thomson's 'The Big Screen'
Subtitled 'The Story of the Movies and What They Did to Us', this full history runs from Muybridge to Facebook with Thomson's typically provocative takes on all the key images and personalities. Published in October.



Stroheim's 'Greed' at BFI Southbank
San Francisco and Death Valley are the settings for Erich von Stroheim's butchered adaptation of Frank Norris's realist novel 'McTeague'. Originally 45 reels long, 'Greed' survives in tantalising incompleteness. Screening on 20 and 26 August.



ANATOMY OF A MOVIE THE DARK KNIGHT RISES



20% Doctor Zhivago (1965)

18% Star Wars Trilogy (1977-83)

15% Metropolis (1927)

10% Breakfast at Tiffany's (1965)

10% Midnight Express (1978)

7% Escape from New York (1981)

5% Intolerance (1916)

5% The Battle of Algiers (1966)

3% Mr. and Mrs. Smith (2007)

3% Con Air (1997)

2% The Trial (1962)

2% Les Vampires (1915)

Venice versus Rome With former Venice programmer Marco Müller (below) having switched to the Rome Film Festival, there's now a head-to-head battle between the venerable festival on the Lido (29 August-8 September), under Alberto Barbera, and Rome (9-17 November), which is boasting 60 world premieres.



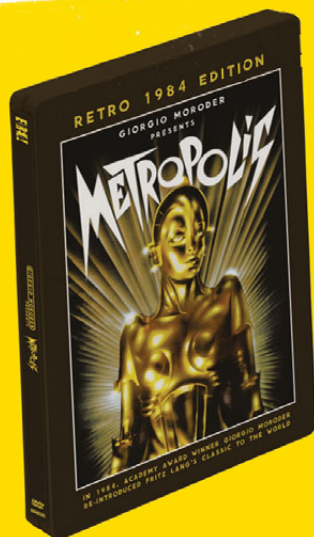
IN 1984, ACADEMY AWARD WINNER GIORGIO MORODER
RE-INTRODUCED FRITZ LANG'S CLASSIC TO THE WORLD

GIORGIO MORODER

PRESENTS

METROPOLIS

UK DVD PREMIERE



WATCH THE TRAILER



With Music By
**FREDDIE MERCURY, PAT BENATAR,
JON ANDERSON, ADAM ANT,
BONNIE TYLER, LOVERBOY,
GIORGIO MORODER**
and more...

EUREKA!
eurekavideo.co.uk

AVAILABLE NOW
DVD STEELBOOK and STREAMING
metropolismovie.co.uk

Available on
iTunes

hmv
hmv.com

DAVID ROBERT MITCHELL

This young filmmaker's debut *The Myth of the American Sleepover* looks back with affection at coming of age in suburbia

By David Jenkins

It's hard not to name-check teen movies like *American Graffiti* (1973) or *Dazed and Confused* (1993) when addressing David Robert Mitchell's shimmering, sun-bleached *The Myth of the American Sleepover*, which debuted at the 2010 South by Southwest Film Festival in Texas, and shares with those films a similarly unforced and observational 'hanging out' vibe.

Set over a single night in a leafy Detroit suburb some time in the pre-mobile-phone mid-1990s (though it's never specified exactly when, and Mitchell wisely avoids using any knee-jerk period visual cues or soundtrack choices), it's a film that looks back with a rare sense of doe-eyed sincerity on summer nights of slumber parties, soft drugs and awkward attempts at sex. Piecing together an ambient, impressionistic tapestry of youthful foibles, Mitchell's camera traces various wonderfully believable high-schoolers (mostly played by non-professional actors) as they swipe at new and exciting experiences – especially those that require a minimum of verbal discourse.

Mitchell initially found work in post-production, editing film trailers and even the 2010 Oscars broadcast – a skill that's clearly visible from the nimble narrative cross-cutting in *The Myth of the American Sleepover*. However, one might pinpoint the actual genesis of Mitchell's filmmaking career as the time in junior high when he wrote a feature-length script for a proposed *Ghostbusters* sequel. It remains unfilmed.

David Jenkins: Is it right to infer from this film that you had a very well-adjusted childhood?

David Robert Mitchell: Yeah, I suppose. But the stories and the characters in this movie are not really mine. This isn't a depiction of the real world. Some of it comes from a desire to rewrite the past. It's showing the kind of things that we hoped for at that age. Maybe we even imagine it to have been that way? I don't like to look at the film as a replica of reality. I had a decent childhood, but I prefer being an adult to being a teenager. I think it's easier.

DJ: It's surprising to hear you say that, because the impression you get from this film is that it was the greatest time ever.

DRM: Part of the thing for me was to create a sense of nostalgia for some of the things we specifically recall, but also a nostalgia for things that we didn't do or see. Longing for a past that maybe wasn't our own. Some of the beautiful and positive things in the film lead to a feeling of pain, because we know that these days are gone and behind us.

DJ: The film's unironic depiction of suburbia as a kind of earthly paradise is a very rare thing in American cinema.

DRM: I wasn't really concerned with the undercurrent of darkness you would see in a David Lynch film – it's more about suggesting there is some underlayer of mystery. And I use



I have seven scripts ready to go and hopefully I'll be able to make them all. I'll do whatever I have to do to make another film

the term 'mystery' in a positive sense. That's something I do remember from being a kid, thinking about my neighbourhood as this truly amazing place. I had this deep emotional connection to geography, landscape, alleyways and the intersection of backyards. For me the film is a celebration of that feeling.

DJ: One sequence is set in a make-out maze where teenagers couple up and neck with one another. Is that based on a real location?

DRM: The make-out maze is definitely something I've fabricated. But there was a tunnel system underneath an abandoned psychiatric hospital that I believe has since been razed and turned into a golf course. It was a place that teenagers went to drink and... y'know. It's kind of an encapsulation of youth: you go there, you separate from your friends and you walk down hallways on your own. It's



Lost world: 'The Myth of the American Sleepover'

scary. It's being alone, it's trying to have some kind of connection with another person and being in a place that's terrifying and unfamiliar.

DJ: The film climaxes with a street parade where we get to see all the characters for one last time. It offers less a sense of closure than a blissful nod towards the future.

DRM: I thought it was important to see these characters again when the sun comes up. I liked the idea of doing this scene without any dialogue – you just get impressions of feelings. I was really excited about it on the page, but the act of doing it was a nightmare. We had no money left and I'd written a parade sequence – that's like the stupidest thing you can do. We were literally running through the crowd with the camera. It was one take of everything.

DJ: For future projects, do you hope to scale up in terms of budget?

DRM: Gosh, I hope so. As I'm sure you hear from everyone, getting money for projects is very difficult. I have seven scripts ready to go and hopefully I'll be able to make them all. If it comes down to it, I'll do whatever I have to do to make another film, even if that means making a very low-budget film. I hope I don't have to.

DJ: Would you consider writing something very mainstream to try to secure a bigger budget?

DRM: I actually have a horror film that we're going out and trying to find money for. I'm a huge horror fan and I love genre films, if they're done really well. We're hoping we could do it later this year. It sort of takes place in the same world as this movie. Except the characters are a bit older. And it's really dark.

i 'The Myth of the American Sleepover' opens on 31 August, and will be reviewed in our October issue

FULL OF EASTERN PROMISE

The first dispatch from our new globe-trotting columnist considers the vibrancy of Asian cinema in all its forms

By Mark Cousins

How do I start a new column in *Sight & Sound*, a magazine I've read since my late teens? With a bang, like *Blue Velvet*, or a whimper – or with restarts, like Woody Allen's *Manhattan*? Do I tell you where I am (on a train in Northumberland), since this column will be written around the world, and will try to describe the flavour and fun of film-loving around the world? Or do I leave that for another day? Let's try a bang.

Cinema is Asian. By this I don't mean that everywhere I look in Asia I see cinema, though that's true. I mean that everywhere I look in cinema I see Asia. Cinema was a Franco-American brainwave, but wherever the movies are best, Asia is present. I don't say this to provoke, just to be fair. Take the one bit of filmmaking that I know best: documentary. In the Western world, we flatter ourselves that the golden age of documentary was *cinéma vérité* and direct cinema in France and America of the 1960s and 70s – the films of Jean Rouch, Robert Drew, the Maysles etc. These people opened windows on worlds and let fresh air into the movies, but the Japanese documentarists of the 60s, 70s and 80s – Ogawa Shinsuke, Tsuchimoto Noriaki, Imamura Shohei and Hara Kazuo – set the bar higher still for immersive commitment, daring and the kind of ire that fuels film.

Move to fiction cinema, and we come across this: the broadly Western idea that cinema is story and psychology is exhilarating and attractive, but isn't it just a bit off the mark? The cubist films of Ozu Yasujiro, where story is downplayed and space and time are the main melody (did Ozu know the mind-fuck of Einstein?) seem – especially as you get older – like a starting-point for movies, the source of the Nile.

But my first three words were cinema is Asian, not because of old movies, but because of what I've seen in the last fortnight. At the Edinburgh International Film Festival (reborn, rebrimming) I saw new films from the Philippines that summarised, for me, how great the movies can be. Jewel Maranan's *Tondo, Beloved: To What Are the Poor Born?* is about a mum and her kids who live in a shack on Manila's waterfront. Maranan films their life together, and then mum giving birth. Maranan's camera shows the fine-grain of motherhood, its touch and texture. She uses cinema with such complete conviction and belief that she reminds us of its magic. Before *Tondo* I saw wunderkind Khavn de la Cruz's *Mondomanila*, a gonzo-Kenneth Anger-esque social burlesque, which manages to be deeply morally serious and use anal close-ups – a sentence I thought I'd never type. I'd seen some of de la Cruz's movies before, but it's the fact that he makes films (more than 30 so far) as if there were no impediments to doing so that makes his production method so vital.

And then I saw Lav Diaz's six-hour *Florentina*



Stay out of the kitchen: 'Mondomanila'

'Mondomanila' is a Kenneth Anger-esque social burlesque, which manages to be deeply serious and use anal close-ups

Hubaldo, CTE. Previously, for me, Philippine cinema meant Lino Brocka, Mike De Leon, *Independencia* or Brillante Mendoza. But Diaz's long, black-and-white, numinous, time-shifting movie about a woman's suffering and the events around it creates a new sort of cinema – call it tropical Béla Tarr. A key plot point doesn't come until four hours ten



The state of India: 'Jai Bhim Comrade'

minutes in, by which time I was mesmerised.

So the Philippine films in Edinburgh were a summary of what cinema – documentary, genre filmmaking and art movies – is and can do. But then I saw Mania Akbari's *One Two One*. Akbari, who played the lead in Abbas Kiarostami's vehicular *10*, is a video artist and filmmaker whose feature directing debut *20 Fingers* is astonishing. In *One Two One*, which uses long, fixed takes, Akbari wanted to make a documentary about an Iranian woman whose face had been disfigured by an acid attack, but instead she filmed a series of faces and duologues, like late Ingmar Bergman, filmed in close-up. She rehearsed for three months and planned so meticulously that even a tiny hair on an actor's face, which would be referred to many minutes into a shot, was carefully placed there. Nearly everything happens offscreen. It's like there's a cathedral or a tragedy just out of shot. More than any film I've seen recently, *One Two One* shows that cinema is about placing things within a shot. It seems strange to say this about a minimalist Iranian film, but Vincente Minnelli, eat your heart out.

So in Edinburgh I watched Asian movies that showed the essence of cinema and its range. Before that I saw *Jai Bhim Comrade*, the new film by India's state-of-the-nation documentarist Anand Patwardhan. Patwardhan's previous



films – about the conflicts around the Babri mosque in Ayodhya, masculinity, the riots in Mumbai etc – made him, for me, the greatest Asian documentarist (though Kawase Naomi, Wang Bing and Hara Kazuo come close.) Like the BBC's Adam Curtis, he connects a web of ideas about society and history. But he films over long periods of time and gets enough of an overview to let us see the curvature of Indian society. *Jai Bhim Comrade* is about the Dalit people the way Dickens is about London. It's a Marxist musical that bubbles like a stream then – over its three-hour running time – opens and deepens like a river.

I write to celebrate it, but also to mention the downside of the fact that cinema is Asian. Most of the major film festivals in the West rejected *Jai Bhim Comrade*. I won't name them, but they know who they are. Euro-American festivals often show docs about small parts of Western life, yet they couldn't find space for this polygeneric film of much greater amplitude that covers decades, generations, great iniquity and the historical picaresque. Why? Because their programmers haven't been to India, perhaps, or they find Patwardhan's work too complex, or because Indian lives are a bit less real to them? Or because they don't quite see that, in some ways at least, Cinema is Asian. Let's watch only Asian films for a year.

OBITUARY

NORA EPHRON 1941-2012

The director, screenwriter, playwright and journalist was noted for her witty and wise romantic comedies

By Catherine Bray

In the last two years of her life, and in the full knowledge that her days were numbered, Nora Ephron included in her book *I Remember Nothing and Other Reflections* a list of things she would miss and another list of things she would not miss. "Panels on women in film" were located tartly in the latter group; one can only imagine how many invitations to participate in these events she received over a career in cinema that dated from her 1970s collaboration with her then-husband Carl Bernstein on a prospective script for *All the President's Men* up to writing and directing *Julie & Julia* in 2009. Bernstein and Ephron's version of the Watergate scandal was never filmed, but that initial experience did give her a taste for writing screenplays. She would later adapt her novel *Heartburn*, about the horrors of being married to Bernstein, for the screen and would go on to be nominated three times for best writing at the Academy Awards, for *Silkwood* (1983), *When Harry Met Sally* (1989) and *Sleepless in Seattle* (1993).

Should Ephron's apparently flippant rejection of debates focused on female voices in cinema be construed as some minor act of gender treachery? In the context of her body of work, no. Ephron was feminist in one of the most meaningful ways a filmmaker can be feminist: simply by getting on with it and creating cinema featuring multiple, three-dimensional, recognisably human characters who happen also to be women, who have their own inner lives, motivations, flaws and charm. As she put it, "I try to write parts for women that are as complicated and interesting as women actually are." She rejected the ciphers of polemic in favour of more genuine representation, writing characters with whom a wide range of cinemagoers could identify and narratives that passed the Bechdel test for assessing the presence of women in works of fiction (1. Does it include at least two women? 2. Who have at least one conversation? 3. About something other than a man or men?).

None of which is to say Ephron shied away from engaging with the so-called gender wars.



Nora Ephron: humour was her weapon of choice

Thankfully, she made humour her weapon of choice. *When Harry Met Sally*, destined to be the key work for which she will be remembered, is a film built on one of the key dilemmas of an equal-opportunities age: can men and women just be friends? The film is smart enough not to presume to give a definitive answer, but you could pluck out almost any scene at random and find not only a bon mot for the age but a Platonic dialogue in miniature zeroing in with characteristic affection on some minor signifier of larger neurosis.

Whether talking about salad dressing, days-of-the-week underwear or taking a lover to the airport, her characters articulated the trivial dilemmas of millions; she had a gift for locating in the apparently mundane the deep-rooted fears and fractures running through all human interaction. She was also willing to stick her head above the parapet, highlighting her role as director of many of her own scripts, including *Sleepless In Seattle*, *Michael* and *You've Got Mail*. "One of the best things about directing movies, as opposed to merely writing them, is that there's no confusion about who's to blame: you are."

Ephron's filmography was nevertheless only half the story. Befitting a writer with a gift for sketches, much of her funniest material found a home in the pages of *The New Yorker* and other outlets; her Stieg Larsson parody, 'The Girl Who Fixed the Umlaut', is as brief as it is devastating. She deserves to be remembered as much for her prose as her contribution to cinema, and also simply for her example of how to lead a life worth living. As Ephron put it, "I hope that you choose not to be a lady. I hope you will find some way to break the rules and make a little trouble out there. And I also hope that you will choose to make some of that trouble on behalf of women."

ALSO IN MEMORIAM



Celeste Holm
29 April, 1917 – 15 July, 2012



Ernest Borgnine
24 Jan, 1917 – 8 July, 2012

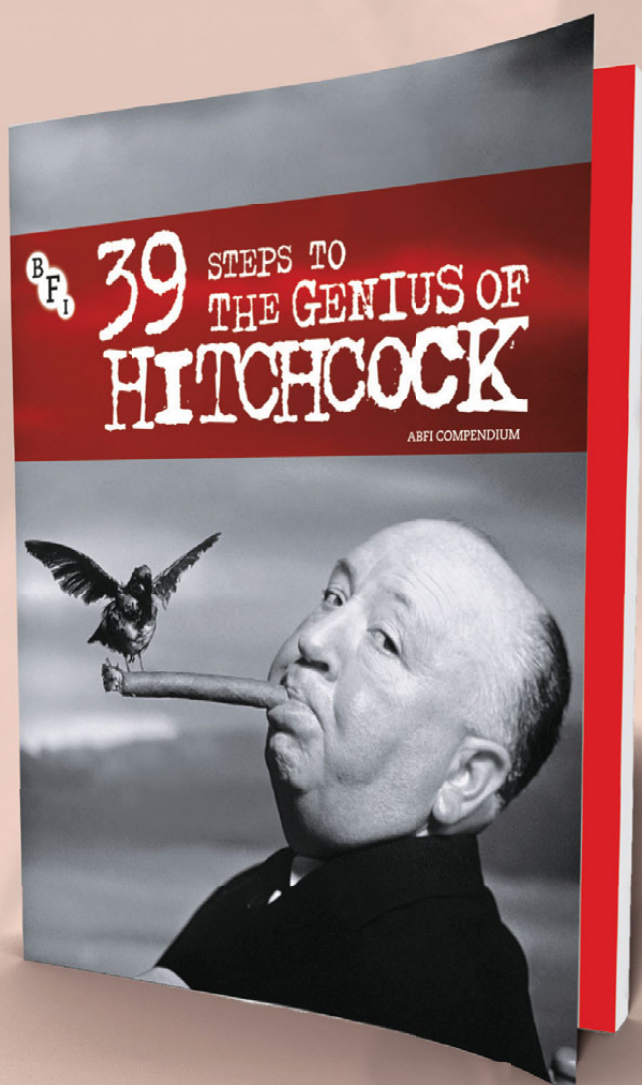


Yamada Isuzu
5 Feb, 1917 – 9 July, 2012

BFI

THE GENIUS OF HITCHCOCK

CELEBRATING CINEMA'S MASTER OF SUSPENSE



Featuring original and richly illustrated essays by 39 eminent critics, curators, historians and filmmakers, the first BFI Compendium is the essential accompaniment to The Genius of Hitchcock season.

Includes new writing from: Charles Barr, Patrick McGilligan, Laura Mulvey, Camille Paglia, David Thomson and Guillermo del Toro.

148 Pages

Price £12*

Exclusively available from the BFI Filmstore, BFI Southbank, London (020 7815 1350) and online from bfi.org.uk/filmstore

Out Now

Background image: Rear Window

NOW SHOWING...

All of Hitchcock's films back on the big screen and much more at BFI Southbank

bfi.org.uk/hitchcock

* Plus postage and packaging when bought online.

MI: GHOST PROTOCOL



Now you see it: the cloaking device in 'Mission: Impossible Ghost Protocol'

The ingenious cloaking device in Brad Bird's franchise update offers a hi-tech refinement of an old Bugs Bunny cartoon sight gag

By Jonathan Romney

Here's one of the finest spy-movie gizmos ever. In the recent *Mission: Impossible Ghost Protocol*, Tom Cruise's Impossible Mission Force members break into a Russian installation to lay their hands on some macguffin or other. This involves operating freely in a corridor without being seen by the guard posted at one end. To do this, the IMF crew use a cloaking device that's extremely simple and unusually cinematic. They erect a portable screen halfway down the corridor that shows a digital simulation of the corridor's other half: the guard thinks he sees an empty corridor, and the IMFers go about their business undetected.

If this sounds familiar, it's because you've seen it before – in the old Warner Bros cartoons. *Ghost Protocol* gives us a hi-tech refinement of the old sight gag in which Bugs Bunny would stretch a canvas across a road and, at lightning speed, paint a *trompe l'oeil* reproduction of a country landscape in order to mislead rabbit-hunting Elmer Fudd (so much the better if what was behind the painting was a strategically placed brick wall).

The inherent cartoonishness of the IMF's gimmick reminds us that *M:IGP* is directed by an animation specialist, Brad Bird. One of Bird's previous films was Pixar's *The Incredibles*, a superhero story that derived its peculiar dazzle from spoofing the super-slick technology of the James Bond-school espionage genre. Turning to live action, Bird tackles *M:IGP* as a sort of cartoon with human actors – which, coming after *The Incredibles*, gives the film a deliciously vertiginous twist.

What's so unsettling about *Ghost Protocol*'s corridor trick is that the illusionism is so overtly self-referential. Like nearly all current

examples of the espionage genre, *M:IGP* wouldn't be possible without CGI – but here's a spy gadget that itself uses CGI. This use of image technology as a plot device offers an implicit commentary on the digitalisation of a genre that, not that long ago, depended at least partly on the appeal of real stunt derring-do. The gadgets in *M:IGP* are effectively (and paradoxically) pitched in the realm of magic, like the miraculous suction boots that Cruise's Ethan Hunt uses to scale tall buildings; Connery-era 007 would have sniffed at such trumpery, though no doubt Wile E. Coyote would have been an early adopter.

There's a further twist, however. For the corridor device to work, it must get a lock on the guard's eyes, so that when he moves – from whatever perspective he looks at the screen – he will always see an image that makes perfect three-dimensional sense. Showing this function at work, Bird lays bare the fact that Hollywood spectacle is no longer a matter of simply creating images, but that all kinds of vision-corrective functions have to be built in for the image to look right, regardless of the peculiarities of individual viewers. CGI spectacle involves not just perfecting but standardising the image – making sure it's impervious to distortions of misreading (either optical or, by extension, critical). CGI is a technology of control, ensuring that the viewer always gets the approved picture.

Then Bird shows the technology fouling up. The IMF team fail to foresee more Russians arriving in the corridor. The illusion device tries to lock onto the gazes of all the guards, clicking from one to another. The corridor illusion fragments, jumps around uncontrollably – becomes pure, flickering image. In that moment, the illusion ceases to be a controlled mainstream production and becomes multiple, subject to the variations entailed by the perspectives of different viewers – more like a piece of installation art. Hunt should have known better than to invest in spy technology manufactured by the Acme Corporation.

TEN FILMS ABOUT MAGICIANS

A list to celebrate this month's rerelease of 'F for Fake', in which Orson Welles shows off his love of trickery and magic



The Vanishing Lady

(above)
Georges Méliès, 1896

The Magician

Thomas Edison, 1900

The Grim Game

Irvin Willat, 1919,
starring Harry Houdini

The Magician

Rex Ingram, 1926

The Water Magician

(above right)
Mizoguchi Kenji, 1933



The Magician

Ingmar Bergman,
1958, starring Max
von Sydow (above)

The Escape Artist

Caleb Deschanel,
1982

**Penn & Teller
Get Killed**

(above)
Arthur Penn, 1989



The Prestige

(below)
Christopher
Nolan, 2006

The Illusionist

(left)
Sylvain Chomet,
2010



DEVELOPMENT TALE

ON THE ROAD



Walter Salles was determined to cast relative unknowns Garrett Hedlund (in the front seat with Kristen Stewart) and Sam Riley as the leads in 'On the Road'

After years of false starts, it looked as if Kerouac's book might never be filmed. But then Walter Salles and José Rivera got behind the wheel

By Charles Gant

When Francis Ford Coppola optioned Jack Kerouac's *On the Road* in 1979, he could scarcely have imagined it would take more than three decades to get the film made, following several changes of director (Joel Schumacher, Gus Van Sant), screenplay dead ends and screen tests. Writers including *The Sweet Hereafter* author Russell Banks had a crack at it, and Coppola himself together with son Roman were defeated. "I tried to write a script, but I never knew how to do it," commented the veteran filmmaker.

It was only in early 2004 – when Bobby Rock, then a senior vice-president of production and development at Coppola's American Zoetrope, saw *The Motorcycle Diaries* – that things began to fall into place. In shaping Che Guevara's road-trip memoir for the screen, director Walter

Salles and screenwriter José Rivera suggested themselves as the best team for bringing Kerouac's celebrated text to film audiences.

Salles and Rivera made the decision not to mine the earlier screenplays for ideas, but to start afresh with the 1957 published book, as well as the original 1951 'scroll' of typewritten pages taped together. They also decided to retrace the steps of Kerouac and Neal Cassady across America, recording their journey in a documentary, *Searching for On the Road*, which is currently in post-production. As Salles's producer partner Rebecca Yeldham tells it, "When it seemed a few years ago that *On the Road* would not be made, it felt that that film may exist unto itself. It looked in that moment like it might be a film that was bitter-sweet and full of melancholia – that the search had resolved in an end where it was not possible to realise that vision."

Despite backing from Pathé and Focus Features, the boutique division of US studio Universal, Salles and his partners ran into heavy weather. As Yeldham explains, "There were

inherent complications and budget thresholds that made the making of the movie challenging for many decades. It wasn't just, 'Oh, they never cracked the screenplay.' It's a complex movie to make. It has an inherent cost because of its vast scope and the complexity of its period content. You are dealing with urban cityscapes – San Francisco, New York and New Orleans – not just wide, open plains. You can't *not* recreate those cityscapes and be authentic to *On the Road*."

Following two years of research and writing, the filmmakers were ready to present a shooting script to their backers, with costings, but the timing was not fortuitous. "2006 was a moment when the sky was falling," says Yeldham. "It was a very different moment to 2004 not only in terms of global economics but also in terms of the specialty film world, in which the studios had lost confidence. The first pass we did on a budget came in much higher than we and anyone else wanted. When we first saw that number in the high 30s [millions of dollars], we knew we didn't want to carry that burden."

Focus in particular balked at those numbers,

THE NUMBERS: STEVEN SODERBERGH

being more used to making indie films in the \$15-20m range, and duly dropped out. Salles's determination to cast relative unknowns in the lead roles of writer Sal Paradise (the fictional version of Kerouac) and live-for-the-moment livewire Dean Moriarty (Cassady) made it more uncomfortable for potential investors, and the financial picture continued to worsen. "Pathé had a meatier appetite," says Yeldham, "and yet the bottom just kept falling out. We couldn't catch up with what was being ascribed as the new perceived value in the marketplace of *On the Road* with two unknowns – which is what Walter really wanted. He didn't want people to come into an experience of seeing an *On the Road* movie and already feeling like they knew those guys."

Pathé was comfortable with Salles's approach to casting – and the intention had always been to surround Garrett Hedlund (as Moriarty) and Sam Riley (as Paradise) with

'It wasn't just how to crack the screenplay. It's a complex movie to make because of its vast scope and period content'

more market-friendly names – but they still wanted to make the film for a lower budget. As Yeldham explains, "We couldn't catch up fast enough to what their new threshold was. There was a moment where, responsibly, we just couldn't go [lower] – it just wouldn't have been the *On the Road* that Walter was visualising. Walter really wanted the movie to witness the passing of seasons. How do you get spring, summer, winter, fall? How do you get the Deep South, the Pacific, the north-east, Mexico? How do you effectively communicate the continent as a character?"

Salvation came from France's MK2 – production company, sales agency, distributor and exhibitor – which stepped up to the plate. Several key territories were sold in advance, and the UK's Film 4 boarded as an equity investor, but at this stage no US distributor was in place. "This is a movie that, in our experience of being involved in it, always evoked greater passion abroad than it did in the US," says Yeldham. "In the US, they tend to look at 'comps' – other films that they perceive to be comparable, that can help them run numbers and set values – and then calculate the risk."

"This is a film that's period, literary, perceived to be for those of heightened intelligence," she continues. "It's not a movie for those who are faint of heart and don't lead with their gut and passion and say, 'Fuck the numbers. I love this and I'm going to do this.' And that's what it took. It took a company who were going to fly in the face of what seemed sensible: MK2. The way that Nathanael [Karmitz] and Charles [Gillibert] reacted was what we had always been hoping to find in all the years of trying to put this together. They read it and loved the script and were like, 'On y va, *Sur la route*. Let's do it.'"



'On the Road' is released in the UK on 12 October. Sight & Sound's set report will appear in a future issue

By Charles Gant

Steven Soderbergh may have earned the respect of cinephiles over the past couple of decades for a consistently ambitious and artistically varied body of work, but his box-office track record has been decidedly patchy. Even his 'one for me, one for them' approach seemed to break down with pricey star-driven offerings such as 'The Good German' and 'The Informant!' that failed to locate the broader audiences they were presumably seeking.

But Lionsgate UK boss Zygi Kamasa acted quickly when he was given the chance to nab territory rights on 'Magic Mike', based on Channing Tatum's experiences as a stripper. "There wasn't even a script at that stage," says Kamasa, "but we immediately saw this as a contemporary 'Saturday Night Fever'. The message was clear that everyone involved wanted it to be fun and commercial."

Lionsgate always knew the film would have a strong female skew, and made that clear with its 'Hello girls!' bus adverts, spoofing the famed Wonderbra adverts. Women over 25 can be a great audience, because unlike men they go to the cinema in groups, and they are more socially organised. But weekends are also crucial for film business, and that's when most women spend time with their partners. Would 'Magic Mike' prove a no-go zone for heterosexual guys?

The film opened on July 11, a Wednesday – a popular midweek choice for a women's night out that also benefits from Orange's two-for-one promotion – and got off to a flying start with £619,000. But it became clear that the picture was also engaging the date-night audience when box office spiked from Thursday (£380,000) to Friday (£575,000) to Saturday (£622,000).

"It was always going to be about the women," comments Kamasa, "and we envisioned a 70/30 split. But it's not a pink, fluffy romcom or a romantic drama. Those are the ones that are even harder to aim at men. We always knew that if we could present



Hot ticket: 'Magic Mike'

it as sexy, cool and entertaining, and a good movie, guys would be willing to give it a go." It didn't hurt that the two lead characters are male, living a lifestyle of unlimited sexual opportunity. And unlike, say, Curtis Hanson's 'In Her Shoes', it isn't saddled with a title that's actively alienating to males.

As 'Magic Mike' made its second run at midweek audiences, the numbers offered encouraging signs for possible longevity. The film achieved its best result so far on day eight, another Wednesday, with £646,000. And having clocked up £5.25m in 12 days, the title has already become one of Soderbergh's biggest grossers, outside the 'Ocean's' franchise.

STEVEN SODERBERGH AT UK BOX OFFICE

Film	Year	Gross
Erin Brockovich	2000	£10,594,716
Traffic	2001	£8,801,058
Contagion	2011	£5,528,737
Magic Mike	2012	£5,249,374*
Out Of Sight	1998	£3,321,442
Haywire	2012	£2,340,171
Sex, Lies, And Videotape	1989	£2,050,000
Che: Part One	2009	£1,350,882
Solaris	2003	£953,208
The Informant!	2009	£486,877

*gross after 12 days; chart excludes 'Ocean's' franchise

ALTERNATIVE THERAPY



Music to exhibitors' ears: the Met Live is the most successful live alternative content event in the UK

Live alternative content, from theatre and opera to sport events and gigs, is beginning to transform the cinema landscape

By David Locke

Live alternative content has established itself as one of the most lucrative and sought-after offerings in the current UK cinema marketplace. With a predicted market value of £15 million by 2012, live events transmitted to cinemas afford exhibitors license to sell tickets at an inflated premium and 'live 3D alternative content' is probably the next big thing. Several circuit chains took the decision to screen the men's Wimbledon tennis final. Ultimately the result, like Andy Murray's achievement, was disappointing – a gross of £42,186 and a screen average of just £898 – but new ground had been broken and the 3D element allowed exhibitors to charge for an event that's broadcast free to air, rather than just offering a refreshment package.

With showings of live music events still in their relative infancy, it is opera and theatre that have led the way, finding favour at both independent cinemas and multiplexes. The National Theatre Live and The Metropolitan Opera Live dominate, straddling this new cinema landscape with a certain swagger. The average ticket price for the NT Live is £15 – in many cases more than a peak period cinema ticket. Some 55 per cent goes to the distributor (roughly what's paid for a Hollywood blockbuster), the rest, minus satellite costs, is the cinema operator's profit. The most successful live alternative content event in the UK is The Met. The average ticket

price is £31.25, with 50 per cent going to the Met, which handles its own UK distribution. With its shows regularly selling out even in 700 seat cinemas, profits – not to mention increased concession sales – are huge.

For exhibitors, therefore, premium live content has become a necessity. Such events seem recession-proof and, equally importantly, weather-proof. As a recent article in *The Guardian* revealed, films remain susceptible to sunshine (however rare that's been this year), with an independent film expecting to lose about 40 per cent of its box office whenever the clouds vanish.

Since pre-booking of live cinema events is a necessity, once the premium has been paid, sunshine is unlikely to inhibit attendance. So, with the live alternative content marketplace booming, companies are establishing specialised divisions to source and distribute events. Sony was responsible for Wimbledon 3D, Picturehouse Entertainment looks after NT Live and Glyndebourne. Cinema operators are also employing specialised programmers whose sole role is the selection not of movies but of non-film-related content.

If this boom is good news for exhibitors and audiences, film distributors, who have seen many of their key titles lose main Saturday evening performances, are more wary. Initially resistant, their objections have proved futile and alternative content is now an accepted reality. There is, however, a wider, more worrying consideration. With more screens being given over to these events, with their lengthy running times, what happens to the films that would have played in their place? Independent or specialised titles likely to generate limited box office used to have to compete only with Hollywood titles with vastly superior marketing budgets. Now they are also expected to go toe to toe with a similarly 'high culture' offer that is a proven, surefire success. With the consequent drastic reduction in screen space at venues, this new content could become the norm and cinema, in all its variety, merely the alternative.

IN PRODUCTION

● **Claire Denis** (pictured below) starts shooting her 11th feature, provisionally titled 'Les salauds' ('The Bastards') in August. Little is known of the plot of the film, but reports suggest it will star Chiara Mastroianni, and reunite Denis with actor Vincent Lindon, who she worked with on 2002's 'Vendredi Soir'.

● **Asghar Farhadi** will follow his Oscar-winning 'A Separation' with 'Dominos', an €11 million (£8.6 million) production set to start shooting in Paris this summer, starring Tahar Rahim and Marion Cotillard. Plot details are under wraps for now, but it is reportedly a social thriller in the vein of 'A Separation'.

● **Philippe Garrel** is to follow his 2011 Venice entry 'A Burning Hot Summer' with a feature provisionally titled 'La Jalousie' ('Jealousy'). The film is reportedly being shot in Rome, with a cast including his son Louis Garrel, Monica Bellucci and Michel Piccoli.

● **Russell Crowe** is set to make his directorial debut with a biopic of the late, great comedian Bill Hicks, who died of cancer in 1994. Though Crowe had reportedly originally considered playing Hicks himself, he now intends only to direct.



● **Miyazaki Hayao** (pictured above), whose last feature as director was 2008's 'Ponyo', is to direct an animated feature on the life of Horikoshi Jiro, the designer of the Zero fighter plane used by the Japanese airforce during World War II, and known to the Allies as 'Zeke'. The project is scheduled to be completed by the end of 2013.

● **Wes Anderson** has enlisted Johnny Depp to star in his next feature, 'The Grand Budapest Hotel'. No details are yet known about the story, but the film is based on a script by Anderson. Owen Wilson has also signed up, and the director is reportedly keen to get Jude Law, Angela Lansbury, Bill Murray, Edward Norton, Adrien Brody and other regulars on board.



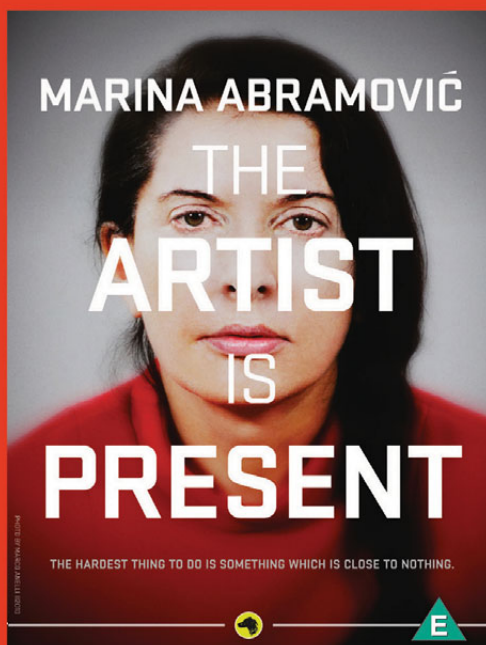
If this boom in live events is good news for exhibitors and audiences, film distributors are more wary

OFFICIAL SELECTION
2012
SUNDANCE
FILM FESTIVAL

★★★★★
THE GUARDIAN

★★★★★
TIME OUT

★★★★★
THE TIMES



WINNER
PANORAMA
AUDIENCE AWARD
2012

★★★★★
EMPIRE

★★★★★
TOTAL FILM

★★★★★
THE DAILY TELEGRAPH

ON DVD 3 SEPTEMBER

'AN AWE-INSPIRING WOMAN EXPLAINED'

Kate Spicer, SUNDAY TIMES STYLE

***'IMAGINE AN HAUTE-COUTURE CRONENBERG BODY
HORROR IN THE GRIPPING FORMAT OF A REALITY
SHOW... DON'T MISS'***

DAZED AND CONFUSED



MARINAFILM.CO.UK



EXPLORING THE CITY ONSCREEN

"Handsome and intriguing, like a ghosthunter's companion to a world that is – and isn't – there"

FRANCINE STOCK

A new film book series from Intellect / www.intellectbooks.com



WORLD FILM LOCATIONS BERLIN

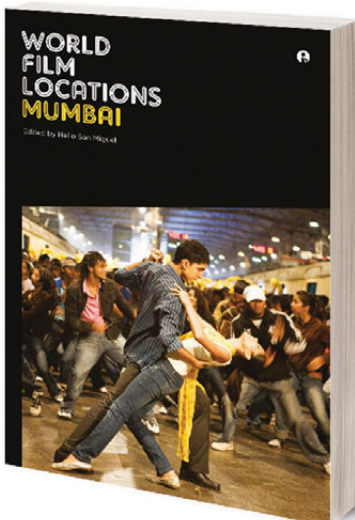
Edited by Susan Ingram

One of the most dynamic capital cities of the twenty-first century, Berlin also has one of the most tumultuous modern histories. A city that came of age, in many senses, with the cinema, it has been captured on film during periods of exuberance, devastation, division, and reconstruction. *World Film Locations: Berlin* offers a broad overview of these varied cinematic representations.

ISBN 9781841506319, Published August 2012

Paperback £9.95/\$18

£9.95/\$18
PAPERBACK



WORLD FILM LOCATIONS MUMBAI

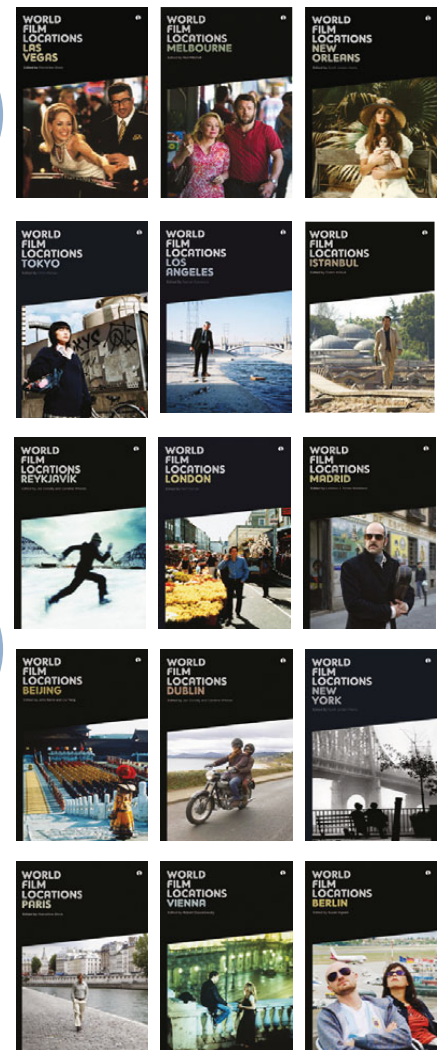
Edited by Helio San Miguel

Fascinating, incommensurable, and chaotic, Mumbai, formerly known as Bombay, is a megalopolis of dramatic diversity and heartbreaking extremes, where immense wealth is just steps away from the searing poverty of its huge slums. The home of Bollywood, Mumbai is also the epicenter of India's film industry and its foremost film location. Through the lens of Mumbai's manifold cinematic representations, *World Film Locations: Mumbai* explores the sheer complexity of this incomparable city.

ISBN 9781841506326, Published August 2012

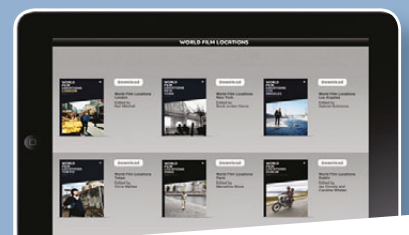
Paperback £9.95/\$18

£9.95/\$18
PAPERBACK



LATEST TITLES NOW AVAILABLE FOR
AMAZON KINDLE AND OTHER E-READERS
+ DOWNLOAD THE FREE IPAD APP >>

VISIT THE KINDLE AND ITUNES STORES FOR MORE INFORMATION



BEN ROBERTS

The new head of the BFI Film Fund beat off some formidable rivals for the role and now takes charge of £21m of public funds a year

By Geoffrey Macnab

On a Monday morning in early July Ben Roberts, the new head of the BFI Film Fund, is sitting in a boardroom in the BFI's Central London offices. The 36-year-old is now in charge of £21 million a year of public money to be pumped into British film production, distribution, exhibition and development. To get the job – one of the most influential within the UK film industry – he beat off some formidable rivals. Many greeted his appointment as ‘refreshingly forward-looking’. Not only is he young, but he’s also from a distribution and sales background, rather than the production sector that spawned his predecessors. At the time of his appointment, Roberts was CEO of Protagonist Pictures, the international sales company set up by Film4, Vertigo Films and Ingenious Media.

Three weeks into his new job, Roberts is not yet ready to announce any new policy decisions, though he is very willing to talk about what he hopes to achieve at the BFI. Roberts studied English literature at Leeds University. He also worked at his local multiplex and admits to a youthful fascination with “numbers, box-office data”. He avidly reads trade magazines and speaks of a formative trip to the BFI Library in London where he picked up two books: *The BFI Handbook* and *The Guerilla Film Makers Handbook*.

“I took *The BFI Handbook* back to my temping BT job in Coventry and wrote to every distributor,” he recalls. Rupert Preston of the then recently formed company Metrodome eventually gave him a job. Thanks to the success of such films as *Human Traffic* (1999) and *Bride of Chucky* (1998), Metrodome was expanding, and Roberts was rapidly promoted from general dogsbody to acquisitions exec.

“I remember just being in Cannes for the team, stumbling by mistake into a screening room that was showing *Chopper*,” he recalls. “I arrived just as he [Chopper] was peeling off his ear, about ten minutes in.” Roberts persuaded his colleagues to buy the film, which was Andrew Dominik’s debut feature and the launch pad responsible for making actor Eric Bana an international name. It’s a prime example of what Roberts calls an “artful genre film” – a title that will play theatrically and be well reviewed, but then sell on DVD to a completely different audience. In other words, it straddles the arthouse/genre line.

When Metrodome acquired the UK rights to Richard Kelly’s *Donnie Darko* in 2002, the film had been in limbo for a while. Given only a limited release in the US after a disastrously misjudged Sundance debut the previous year, it had then been left to fester unseen. “People saw it as a mainstream film that fell short,” says Roberts. “I turned that perspective round and said, ‘No, this is a super-commercial arthouse film.’” Thanks



Ben Roberts: ‘You have to go with your gut’

largely to Metrodome’s energetic marketing, *Donnie Darko* did brisk business in the UK and quickly became established as a cult movie.

Roberts’s next move was to Universal Pictures, where he was vice president, worldwide acquisitions. His job was to pick up titles for the UK (and occasionally for other territories too) that would have a strong DVD value as well as a theatrical life. “There was always tension between the

‘The BFI’s role is to champion filmmakers who wouldn’t have the same opportunity to tell their stories in the commercial space’



‘Chopper’

home-entertainment teams in studios and the theatrical teams. There was a natural hierarchical snobbery,” he recalls. His job was to bring the teams together. Roberts was assigned a lawyer and a “finance person” and left to get on with it. Acquisitions included *The Grudge* (2004), some territories on *Phantom of the Opera* (2004), Tony Scott’s *Domino* (2005), *Step Up* (2006), various Sam Raimi movies and the Jason Statham thriller *Crank* (2006). He discovered that studios were far less nimble than their independent rivals, in spite of their greater resources – and far more political too.

Five years later, when the chance came to head up the sales team at Protagonist, Roberts jumped. As a distributor, he knew what mattered to buyers. “I was going to the markets and couldn’t believe the materials that were being produced to announce films,” he recalls. “Sales is always seen as a slightly mechanical middleman [role]. I disagreed with that. I thought, ‘No, these are the guys making or breaking the early identity of a film.’”

Having joined the BFI, the UK’s lead agency for film, Roberts is now in a very different world. Why did he decide to move into the public sector? “It was exciting to see an organisation with strong cultural values – which I share – tackling this additional commercial challenge,” he says. As for the tension that has long existed between ‘cultural’ and ‘commercial’ filmmaking in the UK, Roberts feels: “It’s not black-and-white. My instincts are that you have to support strong filmmakers – you have to go with your gut. Audiences, if you’re successful, will respond to that. You can’t condescend to audiences.” He adds that the BFI’s role is “to champion filmmakers who wouldn’t have the same opportunity to tell their stories in the commercial space”.

One goal Roberts has already set is “to have more UK people watching more UK films”. At the same time, he’s keen to support auteurs. “Not everything has to reach a big audience, but it has to exist for a reason,” he explains. “I suppose you do have to make a value equation between the cost of a film and how widely it is going to reach. But if Terence Davies is making films for relatively modest budgets, telling incredibly realised stories that can be watched in 100 years’ time – that’s totally valid.”

Roberts acknowledges that he doesn’t have a background in production. “But I don’t think that’s my function here,” he insists. “My function is to be questioning but sympathetic towards the filmmaking community. There is a team here offering a lot more production-based experience [than mine]. My job is to create a space where filmmakers can have friendly, productive conversations with us.” Meanwhile, the BFI now has the ability to help filmmakers get their films into distribution too.

I put it to Roberts that the UK film industry has a very patchy record when it comes to ethnic and gender diversity. “I am gay, so I have a vested interest in diversity,” he points out. “It’s a real priority. We want to welcome filmmakers from all parts of the UK, all backgrounds, so that they’re telling stories relevant to different audiences.”

Reader offers

COMPETITIONS

THE GREATEST FILMS OF ALL TIME: WIN A COLLECTION OF 50 FILMS ON DVD!

To celebrate our 2012 poll, we're giving away a bumper selection of 50 films that made our top 100 critics' list on either DVD or dual-format edition for two lucky readers. Featured films include *Sunrise*, *Modern Times*, *Seven Samurai*, *The Third Man*, *Vertigo*, *Les Enfants du paradis* and *Close-Up*!

To be in with a chance of winning, simply answer the following question:

Q. Which film came third in S&S's 1992 critics' poll?

- a. Tokyo Story
- b. Citizen Kane
- c. La Règle du jeu

Our thanks to Artificial Eye, BFI DVD, Eureka, Park Circus, Second Sight, Soda Pictures, Studio Canal and Universal Pictures (UK) for their generosity in making this prize possible.



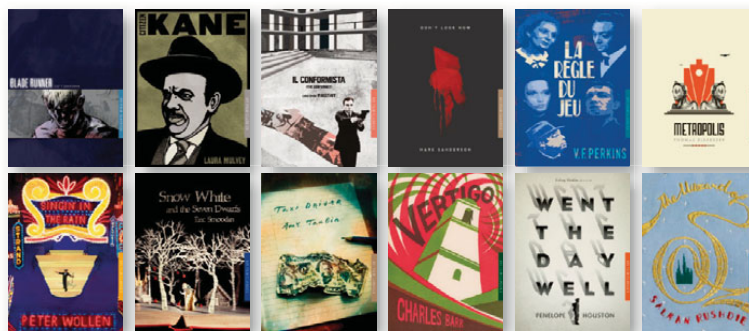
BFI FILM CLASSICS: THREE SETS OF TWELVE FILM CLASSICS TO BE WON

This year marks the 20th anniversary of BFI Film Classics, the renowned series of books that interpret landmark 'classic' films. To mark the occasion, nine titles have been reissued as a collectible set, with each volume sporting a newly designed cover. Classics given a makeover include *The Wizard of Oz*, *Citizen Kane* and *Vertigo*. Latest editions included in the prize are *La Règle du jeu*, *Il conformista* and *Snow White*.

To be in with a chance of winning, simply answer the following question:

Q. For which one of these categories did *The Wizard of Oz* win at the Academy Awards in 1940?

- a. Original song
- b. Actress
- c. Art direction



HOW TO ENTER

Email your answer, name and address, putting either 'Sight & Sound Film Poll', or 'BFI Classics' in the subject heading, to s&scompetition@bfi.org.uk. Or send a postcard with your answer to either 'Sight & Sound Film Poll DVD competition', or 'BFI Classics competition', at Sight & Sound, BFI, 21 Stephen Street, London W1T 1LN
The deadline for all competitions is Tuesday 18 September 2012

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- * The prizewinners of all competitions will be picked at random and notified within ten days of the closing date.
- * Employees of the BFI or companies related to the competitions are ineligible to enter.
- * Prizes cannot be exchanged for cash.
- * The BFI may wish to contact you to keep you informed of future events. Please indicate on your email/postcard if you do not wish to hear from the BFI regarding any other BFI promotions or news.

PREVIOUS WINNERS

July 2012 issue winners:
Billy Wilder Steelbook editions – Alice Bishop, Laurent Burel, Georgina Coburn.
Roll Out the Barrel DVD – Alan Gross, Ian Lister, Stephen McCarthy, Neil McDonald, John Simon Perring.
Hitchcock book – Alan Boon, Patrick Dinen, Paul Farmer, Hélène Faure, Douglas Keesey.
Jack Nicholson biography – Mrs P Kippax, Lawrence Guy Martin, Bill Pannifer, Sue Simkin, Neil Woodhouse.

SUBSCRIBE TODAY

THERE ARE THREE WAYS TO GET YOUR ESSENTIAL INTERNATIONAL FILM MAGAZINE

1

12 MONTH PRINT SUBSCRIPTION + FREE DIGITAL EDITION £45 (UK), £68 (ROW)

- UK subscribers save £9 on the cover-price – that's two issues free!
- All print subscriptions come with a FREE digital edition, plus a two-year digital archive of back issues!*
- UK subscribers who pay by direct debit will receive one of these BFI dual-format DVD/Blu-rays:



2

DIGITAL-ONLY SUBSCRIPTION: £30 (GLOBAL PRICE FOR 12 MONTHS)

- The most cost-effective way to read *Sight & Sound*.
- Available on PC/Mac, iPad and selected Android devices.
- Includes a two-year digital archive of back issues.
- Features: interactive pages, video content, text search, clippings and bookmarks.



3

THE DIGITAL ARCHIVE: SIGHT & SOUND AND THE MONTHLY FILM BULLETIN

- The 80-year archive of both titles digitised – available on PC/Mac!
- Available to subscribers only – an additional £20 for 12 months' access.*
- Features: full text search, clippings, bookmarks and high-quality print options.



FOR MORE INFORMATION & TO SUBSCRIBE:

Visit: www.bfi.org.uk/sightandsound/subscribe Or call our subscription hotline: +44 (0) 20 8955 7070

FAQs and demo for the digital edition and digital archive available from 7 August via bfi.org.uk/sightandsound/subscribe

Existing subscribers: register your email address to receive your FREE digital edition. (Visit the above website and follow the links).

*Please note: access to the digital edition and archive is limited to individual paid subscribers. Institutional/library subscriptions are unavailable. Existing UK subscribers who wish to renew their subscription and take advantage of the direct debit offer can do so by renewing today – simply call our Subscription department with your details. Not to be used in conjunction with any other offer.

BACK ISSUES & BINDERS

'Sight & Sound' back issues are available going back to 1995, priced at £5.50 (UK) and £6.50 (ROW). Check issue contents at: www.bfi.org.uk/sightandsound.

'Sight & Sound' binders are priced at £8.25 (UK), £9.99 (Europe), and £12.50 (ROW).

Order by calling +44 (0) 20 8955 7070

Cheques should be made payable to 'BFI' and sent to: Sight & Sound Binders/Back Issues, PO Box 2068, Bournehall House, Bournehall Road, Bushey WD23 3ZF

WHITE MISCHIEF

Shot in black-and-white, 'Tabu' moves from the lonely existence of an old lady in Lisbon to a rapturous evocation of her youthful romance in colonial Africa. But no plot description can do justice to the playful and idiosyncratic poetry of Portuguese director Miguel Gomes

By Mar Diestro-Dópidio



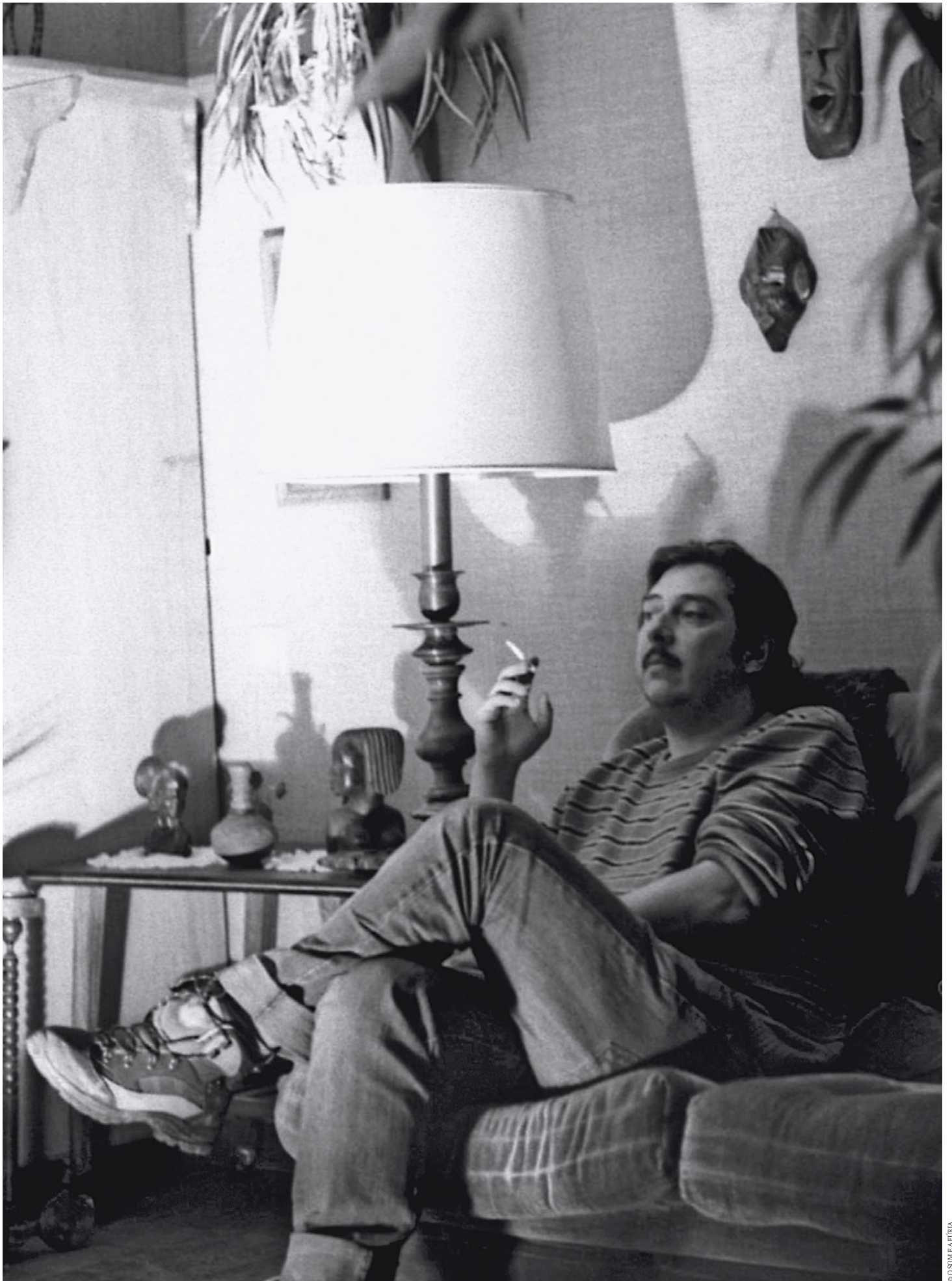
THE HUNTER
Young Aurora (Ana Moreira) in the African-set section of 'Tabu', a film that uses the two-part structure favoured by Portuguese director Miguel Gomes, opposite

"What I'm telling you is not reality – they're tales," declares a tour guide early on in Miguel Gomes's impassioned and intensely cinematic third feature *Tabu*. That phrase could apply to any of Gomes's films – the festival favourite *Our Beloved Month of August* (*Aquele Querido Mês de Agosto*, 2008) or the Rivettian fairytale *The Face You Deserve* (*A Cara que Mereces*, 2004) – since they all make play with what the Portuguese director sees as our inextinguishable hunger for fiction, as expressed through folklore, history, songs, cartoons, fables, literature and – most explicitly in the case of *Tabu* – cinema. Coloured by his own highly idiosyncratic way of looking at the world, each of Gomes's meta-fictional, shapeshifting films is at once warm, ironic, thoughtful, playful, touching, absurd and serene. It's a winning mix that has positioned him as one of the most groundbreaking and inventive figures in contemporary cinema.

Tabu is two films in one (or one film divided in two, or one film dreamed by another). It even has a twin or double of sorts in F.W. Murnau's own *Tabu* (1931), from which Gomes lifted his title, and to which he refers obliquely, albeit with one crucial difference: the two sections of Gomes's film repeat Murnau's section titles, but in reverse. Gomes's first section, 'Lost Paradise', is set in a wintry present-day Lisbon (shot in downbeat black-and-white 35mm), where three lonely elderly women live: Aurora, her African maid Santa and their neighbour Pilar. The death of Aurora prompts a lengthy flashback entitled 'Paradise', narrated by a newly introduced old man, Ventura, whose soothing, tired voice transports characters and viewers back 50 years to an unnamed Portuguese colony in Africa. Filmed on a beautiful, grainy 16mm black-and-white stock that imparts a dreamlike, archaic feel to the love affair Ventura had with the young Aurora, this section's most striking feature is that, although not literally silent, it has no audible dialogue. Earlier, right at the beginning of the film, we have had a foretaste of the 'Paradise' to come in a pre-credits prologue concerning the legend of a love-lorn lady and a melancholy crocodile who haunt the savannah together – a lovely, playful yet deceptively absurd Gomesian touch.

Metaphorically speaking, nothing in *Tabu* is black-and-white, but rather an infinite palette of greys. There is always a certain darkness lurking behind the seeming lightness of his films: the tragedy of growing up in *The Face You Deserve*, or parental care that borders on the disturbing in *Our Beloved Month of August*. In *Tabu*, Aurora's decision to lock away the secrets of her past (and make them effectively taboo) points to a profound, guilty isolation, and an inescapable longing for that past. Longing and loneliness – both experiences are at the heart of the Portuguese spirit of *saudade*, which flows like a deeply submerged undercurrent through Gomes's films, anchoring him in a great and long tradition of the national culture.

But this being a Gomes film, everything is undercut by his trademark deadpan sense of humour. And although the characters who populate *Tabu* share a powerful urge to believe, religion is soon put on the same level with folklore, wizardry and superstition. This combination of sympathy and scepticism not only serves to stave off any slide into melodrama, but more importantly calls into question the film's big themes, from love to colonialism, guilt, loss and mortality – all of them measured against the unreliable parameters of memory, time and personal experience. 



© OSOME AFURIA



It was a very strange thing to find a place that nobody's filmed. How many places in the world can you say that about?



Mar Diestro-Dópido: Where did the initial idea for 'Tabu' come from?

Miguel Gomes: The first part of the film is close to some stories a relative of mine told me about her own neighbour, a senile old lady who thought her African maid was a witch – pretty much what you have in the first part of the film. But mostly I started being interested in characters you don't get to see so much in cinema: older women who are far from marginal, who are integrated in society and leading ordinary lives, but who are lonely. And then I knew I wanted to have a counterpoint to that.

Africa is like a place of youth, and so it's really when the old Aurora dies that the film just opens and there is a new scale of things – and maybe a time when for these characters everything was more possible, because they were younger and because they had all the land to explore. Of course, this would only exist in a political regime of oppression like colonialism, but they don't seem to care that much in the second part. They don't seem to have any problems with this. And there's this connection between the two parts where everyone in the first part seems to be dealing with something that went wrong in that past Portuguese 'New World'. If what you're seeing in the second part of the film is a melodrama, I guess then the first part is a post-melodrama, which means that the world of these emotions – these big stories – is lost. They are gone, finished.

MDD: Is this desire to recover something lost what prompted you to choose the same title as the Murnau film, and shoot in black-and-white?

MG: It was not a question of being linked to a specific film of Murnau's. I just wanted to have a connection with silent films, and somehow for me Murnau is pretty much representative of that moment in film history. More than any other director, he is the greatest. So the idea was to have a title that would have a relation with something symbolic or important in the history of cinema. My cinematographer and I wanted to make the film with material which is central to the history of cinema – and which is also on the verge of disappearing. We thought, "Maybe this is our last chance to shoot

on film stock in black-and-white." It was the only way to do it properly.

We wanted to have two different kinds of black-and-white. In the first part, the 35mm black-and-white is of course richer – you have more tones of grey and it has better definition; 16mm has more grain. So everything in Lisbon is 35mm and everything in Africa is 16mm. We thought that the mood of the film is black-and-white, even in the first part. And in the second part, we wanted to change this black-and-white and have it less solid and dreamier, closer to memories.

MDD: Why did you decide not to have dialogue in the second half, and yet retain other sounds?

MG: I wanted to approach the sensation of a silent film, but without trying to reproduce the aesthetics of silent film. I'm Portuguese, I'm living in 2012 and I'm not in 1920s Hollywood. So I had to invent a way to get there – not to the silent film, but to the sensation of the silent film. We did it in two ways: sometimes we recorded the actors improvising dialogue in the scene but without producing sound; and there were moments in which they were really talking and then we erased the sound. And so what I invented was that in the second part of the film there'd be this guy telling the story. But when you are telling an old story that took place 50 years ago, you don't remember the words that people say – it's as if time erases that. You only remember certain images.

MDD: One of the most notable characteristics of your films is their strong sense of place – here Lisbon in winter is contrasted with the open spaces and richness of an unnamed country in Africa. Was it a challenge to film in Africa?

MG: It was a challenge, for sure. I intended to film in a former Portuguese colony, but Angola was out of the question because it's one of the most expensive countries in the world nowadays, since they found oil. The other option was Mozambique. When we took a little tour there to see locations, lots of people kept talking about this place in the north, but everyone said it'd be impossible to film there because you don't have hotels – there's nothing there but tea plantations and very bad roads. When people tell me something's impossible, of course I become more interested. So I went there and it was so beautiful it was immediately: "This is the place! Change whatever we have to change in the script – the film is set here." It was a very strange thing to find a place that nobody's filmed. How many places in the world can you say that about? But it meant it was very hard to do it.

MDD: Changing your script halfway through filming sounds similar to what happened on your previous film 'Our Beloved Month of August'. Did it mean a lot of on-the-spot improvisation, as on that film?

MG: When I am working on a project there is always one day when my producer comes to me and says, "OK Miguel, we don't have enough money to do what you have written." I get very upset, but the next day I say, "OK, let's throw the script in the bin. Give me all your money and I'll do my best here – but let's improvise." So the second part of the film in Africa was improvised.

We knew the story, we knew the characters, we knew Aurora would become pregnant. What we did was to form a little group of people within the crew – the co-writer, my assistant, the editor and me – and we called

ourselves the “central committee”. Our job was to invent scenes every day – to come up with a menu of possibilities. So every day the central committee decided which way to go, like “let’s make this guy who’s a cook into a wizard as well, so he can pass on the information that Aurora is pregnant” – a guy that we met there who really was a cook. Of course we knew we would be writing the voiceover during the editing to restructure the whole film.

MDD: Like your two previous films (and like Murnau’s), ‘Tabu’ is divided into two clear parts. Why do you prefer that kind of structure?

MG: I get bored easily, so I try to create films that change. Each film invents its own world, which is not the one we are living in, but the world of cinema. It’s interesting to create this specific world, which works with certain rules, and then in the middle of that a new world appears. And these two parts with different rules can clash in some way and create a third film, which is of course the experience of having passed from one part to the other – and which is not on the screen, but forms in the mind of the viewer.

MDD: Could you talk about memory and history in ‘Tabu’, particularly in terms of cinema?

MG: Cinema allows you to recover memories, and *Tabu* is related directly to this idea, even if I wasn’t aware of it while I was making it – because it’s a film about a woman who will literally disappear in the first part, and then that death gives birth to an extinguished colonial society. So then the film can also enter into a dialogue with an extinguished form of cinema (which is silent film) and even with classical American cinema, like the Hollywood films that were made about Africa, such as *Hatari!* and *Mogambo* – films I really love. And that’s why I wanted to make a film that deals with time and memory, although I never said that either to myself or to others.

There’s always something that transfers from one part of the film to the other. Here it is the weight of time that goes directly into the characters of the second part. You have young bodies but with the weight of time, of old age, of the loneliness that you have seen before in the first part.

MDD: And is the melancholy crocodile linked to this feeling somehow?

MG: I like animals. And I am very attached to crocodiles – I don’t know why, it’s very irrational. I think crocodiles come from ancient times – they look prehistoric – so maybe they can remember things that peo-



THREE ELEMENTS
A prologue about a crocodile is followed by sections on the lonely Aurora, below, in modern Lisbon, and romantic memories of colonial Africa, far left

ple already forgot. And then I came to the conclusion that maybe the crocodile is a witness to lovers knowing each other and then separating, empires being built then falling apart, all the motion of the world – because they are there before all the stories, all the societies appearing and disappearing, and hopefully they’ll still be there afterwards. So I guess that, even if I’m not a fan of symbolism, in this case the crocodile stands a little bit for time and memory.

MDD: Could you talk about the characters’ need for stories in ‘Tabu’? The second part is narrated by Ventura, and the images we see could be what he remembers, or what Aurora’s African maid Santa or their neighbour Pilar imagines.

MG: I was really interested in working with these characters who appear quite normal but who have a huge desire for something, which is fiction. That’s what we all share, isn’t it? The characters share the same interest as the viewers in what Ventura – someone we hear might be a little bit crazy or senile – is going to tell us in the second part. And we are all listening, the viewers and the characters, and sharing at this moment a desire for fiction. So the second part is almost like a gift to the characters and to the viewer; because it is not going to change either the characters’ lives nor our lives as viewers, but it’s literally a film that comes like a gift to fulfil this need we all have for fiction, for cinema.

In this sense, Pilar is like a viewer and Aurora is already a film character. She’s always trying to impress everyone. In the first part of the film she’s changing clothes all the time, she’s doing her show, and she imposes herself on everybody. But in the case of Pilar I told the actress [Teresa Madruga] to act like an astonished woman who looks at everything as if it was cinema.

MDD: Aurora and Pilar are like opposites, but there are many such contrasts in the film. Why do you choose to set up your characters and situations in that way?

MG: You get this a lot in silent cinema. For instance Murnau divided his *Tabu* into ‘Paradise’/‘Lost Paradise’, *Nosferatu* into night/day, shadow/light, countryside/city – he has all these binary oppositions that nowadays are lost. First of all, we as viewers have lost our innocence – we are more in a state of disbelief. It is harder to get the viewer to be engaged by these primary and very simple oppositions. The school that won in contemporary cinema (as opposed to mainstream American cinema) is a very realistic and naturalistic kind of cinema, and therefore you have more character psychology; so these very linear oppositions that come from the origins of cinema have been jettisoned, which is a shame. I believe we don’t have to like very complex psychological kinds of cinema. We should just roam instead inside these primordial emotions and oppositions, and in a way try to recover something of the lost innocence that the viewer once had.

i ‘Tabu’ is released in the UK on 7 September, and is reviewed on page 92



I was really interested in working with these characters who appear quite normal but who have a huge desire for something, which is fiction



MASTER OF ILLUSION
'F for Fake', above, gave Orson Welles, opposite, a chance to blend his skills as filmmaker and magician

The early 1970s for Orson Welles, by then in his mid-fifties, were typical of the way his life as a self-declared independent filmmaker had resolved itself since the 1950s: a whirl of what the French call *travaux alimentaires* – bread-and-butter work, acting and narrating and an increasing number of guest appearances on comedy shows – out of which he attempted to finance at least the initial work on the bewildering number and variety of projects which endlessly proliferated in his fertile brain.

As a director, he was out on a limb. Neither of his mainstream American ventures of the 1950s, his dazzling teleplay *The Fountain of Youth* (1956) for Desilu nor *Touch of Evil* (1958) for Universal, had led to any further offers of work. Back in Europe, where he had been living and working since 1947, he had shot – with intermittent financing, and in the face of what to anyone else would have been insuperable obstacles – *Othello* (1952) and 1955's *Mr Arkadin* aka *Confidential Report* (neither released in America); as a sideline, he had created some remarkably innovative work for British television: *Orson Welles's Sketchbook* and *Around the World with Orson Welles*, for the BBC and Associated-Rediffusion respectively. There had been some stage work: a triumphant *Moby-Dick* in London in 1955, an indifferent *Chimes at Midnight* in Ireland in 1960, and a *Rhinoceros* at the Royal Court Theatre from which he had been sacked by its star, Laurence Olivier. He had even created a ballet, *Lady in the Ice*, for Roland Petit, again in London.

Through this blur of activity Welles managed, in the 1960s, to shoot – again, under virtually impossible financial circumstances – the film that many of us consider to be his masterpiece, *Chimes at Midnight* (1966), as well as the relatively fiscally stable *The Trial* (1962), produced by the Salkinds, *père et fils*, and the elegant and concise Isak Dinesen adaptation *The Immortal Story* (1968), made for French television, Welles's only completed fiction film in colour. These films – the tiniest fraction of his list of projects – were the ones where, by happy accident, the sperm, so to speak, hit the egg. There were oth-

ers – his saga of the Dumas clan, for example, or *Surinam*, his Conrad adaptation (from *Victory*), or his screenplay from Joseph Heller's *Catch-22* – which simply never happened. And there were those of which he shot what he could, for as long as he could afford to. *The Deep* from 1970 was among these projects, abandoned, half-edited and not fully shot; more significantly, that same year Welles began shooting *The Other Side of the Wind*, a magnum opus designed as his response to the death of the old Hollywood and the birth of the new. Meanwhile, *Orson's Bag*, a compilation of sketches, improvisations and a substantial 40-minute version of *The Merchant of Venice*, for CBS, foundered when the company, for 'tax reasons', withdrew its backing.

This was Welles's world. Stop, start; glimmers of hope quickly snuffed out; unending acting work on other men's films (including, most bitterly of all, on the 1970 *Catch-22* directed by the new kid on the block, Mike Nichols); doing the rounds of the television shows of Johnny Carson, Dean Martin, Dick Cavett and Rowan and Martin, telling anecdotes, doing magic tricks, burlesquing himself, enduring fat jokes, partly to make money but also, as he fondly hoped, to remind Hollywood (which he never ceased hoping to return to) of his existence.

Meanwhile, among all this confusion of different Welleses, another potent image had been long forming, particularly in Europe, of the *réalisateur maudit* of the great director, blighted by destiny, or the studios, or the financiers, denied access to the means of production. Welles himself – as opposed to his films – loomed very large indeed, a kind of Vanderdecken of film, a Flying Dutchman doomed to roam the world, begging bowl in hand, until he could finally make the film or films that would fulfil his destiny as the greatest of the great. He became a pin-up for *Cahiers du cinéma*, a terrible example and a hero at the same time.

He was endlessly profiled on British and European television. In 1968, for example, French television produced a 30-minute film called *Portrait: Orson Welles*,



co-directed by Frédéric Rossif and François Reichenbach. Welles and Reichenbach had met when the latter interviewed him on the set of *Is Paris Burning?* (1966). They hit it off and kept in touch, most often meeting at the editing studio Antégor, “nerve centre for independent documentary-makers”, as François Thomas and Jean-Pierre Berthomé put it in their indispensable *Orson Welles at Work*. In 1970 Reichenbach, with the British journalist Richard Drewett, made *Elmyr: The True Picture?*, a 40-minute BBC documentary about Elmyr de Hory, the Hungarian faker of 20th-century masters, and his biographer Clifford Irving; Reichenbach asked Welles to narrate it. Welles declined, but was predictably intrigued, on many levels, by the material. It touched him at many points: his own facility as a painter, his lifelong fascination with conjuring – with the art of illusion in all its forms, in fact – and his equally long-standing attraction (from *Citizen Kane* onwards) to biographical enquiry all chimed with him.

He may well have had occasion to ponder deeply on the question of what a man’s life amounts to when, in August 1970, his Madrid villa burned down, wiping out many of his papers, screenplays, stories and sketches. And the subject of Reichenbach’s film, the delicate question of authorship, which had dogged Welles from at least as far back as the famous *War of the Worlds* broadcast in 1938, now raised its head in particularly aggressive form with the publication, in successive issues of *The New Yorker* in February 1971, of two articles by Pauline Kael alleging that Herman Mankiewicz, Welles’s credited co-author of the screenplay of *Citizen Kane*, had in fact written the whole thing. Welles was deeply upset by this allegation; Reichenbach’s film now took on an urgent personal relevance for him.

Reichenbach had shown Welles the hour or so of footage that he had been unable to use; now he became seriously intrigued, asking Reichenbach to allow him to rework the material into a film of his own. Reichenbach not only agreed but offered to finance a 30-minute film through his own company Les Films 

HEY PRESTO

The 1970s have been seen as a period of frustration for Orson Welles, as he struggled – and failed – to complete self-financed feature films. But the same period saw his invention – or rather improvisation – of the essay film with the brilliant ‘F for Fake’

By Simon Callow



BFI NATIONAL ARCHIVE/SPECIAL COLLECTIONS (3)



THE FAKERS
The story of Elmyr de Hory, right, and his biographer Clifford Irving, left, inspired Welles, top, to make 'F for Fake', as a showcase for Oja Kodar, opposite

du Prisme. Welles accordingly went to Ibiza to shoot new material with de Hory, and shot scenes in a Paris restaurant with himself and Reichenbach in discussion. But somehow the material failed to gel; Welles seemed to have reached an impasse and his initial enthusiasm petered out.

Then, in January 1972, sensational news broke: it was revealed that the autobiography of the notoriously reclusive Howard Hughes, whose sale had been brokered by none other than de Hory's biographer Clifford Irving, had in fact been forged by Irving himself. This news that the faker's biographer was himself a faker galvanised a delighted Welles, who instantly saw the potential for a movie in which nothing is as it seems – in which everything, in fact, is fake. This idea liberated him. He could use stock footage, footage he had shot himself for other purposes or no purpose at all. He would weave apparently disparate elements into a vivacious and completely non-linear essay on the idea of fakery, a dazzling scherzo on the theme of deception, at the still centre of which would be a meditation on the great cathedrals, built by unknown craftsmen. Who cares, asks Welles, who built Chartres? Its greatness is independent of its authorship.

THE ART OF EDITING

For one of the most present of filmmakers, whose every frame proclaims his authorship of his film, whose performances overwhelmingly dominate his own work, whose bulky profile was among the best-known images of 20th-century culture, to make a film praising anonymity is just one of many pieces of outrageous chutzpah in the film that finally became known as *F For Fake* (1973). But beyond the question of authorship, beyond even the question of fakery, the film is above all a hymn to the art of editing – of which, from *Othello* onwards, Welles had become an absolute master. In that work, his editorial virtuosity derived partly from necessity – the film had to move fast because too often, in a movie shot on several continents over many years, the eye had to be distracted.

As early as his work on the footage he shot for his stage show of *Too Much Johnson* at the Mercury Theatre in 1938, he had discovered what all directors quickly find out: to shoot is human, to edit divine. Here, in the editing suite, the director is absolute master, able to make a fast scene slow, a slow one fast, a funny scene sad, a dully-acted one dazzling. Increasingly Welles regarded filming as simply the generation of the rawest of raw material to be shaped, changed, transmuted by the editorial hand. In the early 1950s, Darryl Zanuck had given him a portable moviola in lieu of a salary; it went with him wherever he went.

With Welles, filming and editing went hand in hand to an unusual degree; in *F For Fake* the editing preceded the filming: as the film took shape in the editing suite, Welles saw the direction the film was taking, and this dictated the shots he required. And as events in the external world unfolded, he was able to respond to them. He worked from 5am to 11pm every day, with up to three different editors, reeling off instructions as he passed from one editor to the next. He moved the film away from narrative towards pure prestidigitation. Its form, Thomas and Berthomé observe with inimitable Gallic precision, is *rhizomatic*, "like tubers that multiply underground throwing up roots, no one being more important than any other... The underlying thread of the film is the magician's control over the credulous mind and its corollary – the desire to believe in the improbable."

At the centre of it all is Welles the conjuror. In Henry Jaglom's 1970 experimental film *A Safe Place* he had played a character known only as The Magician; he would do so in other films, in various different manifestations. But *F For Fake* is his magical apotheosis. Throughout the film, his sense of exhilaration in his own virtuosity is palpable: making it, he refound his almost childlike sense of joyous discovery, of naughty astonishment at what he could get away with. After *Citizen Kane*, *F For Fake* was the next best train set a boy ever had.

Gary Graver, his cinematographer on much of the film, describes how, when the money was running out,

they improvised technical solutions, inventing the cinema as they went along, just as Griffith had done, as Gance had done with *Napoléon*. The opening credit sequence, for example, was filmed in an abandoned old house in the depth of the countryside. The sequence called for a 360° shot, but they had no generator to produce the requisite light. They decided instead to give each of seven or eight crew members sun guns. As the camera circled by, one after another of the crew would duck down to keep out of shot, then immediately stand up again; it works perfectly. On another occasion, lacking a focus puller, the cinematographer rigged up a string with a toothpick attached to the lens and adjusted the focus as he operated.

Graver, whose experience was essentially on low-budget (and fairly low-life) movies, was Welles's ideal partner in filmmaking, ready to be told what to do by Welles, but endlessly inventive of means – cheap means – by which to achieve what he was asked for. Welles's extraordinary ability to keep the whole film in his mind as he worked enabled him to create shots which would match the pre-existing footage. This godlike capacity to yoke together people who had been filmed years and sometimes oceans apart, defying time and space, is another element of the film's quite extraordinary exhilaration. It feels like a young man's film, not least in the director's quite shameless desire to show off his sexy girlfriend to the world.

Oja Kodar had been a part of Welles's life since 1962, when he was directing *The Trial*. He remained married to Paola Mori, but their intimate life was over. Oja had quickly become an artistic partner as well as an emotional and sexual one. All the evidence suggests that in her Welles had at last found his soulmate – a woman with whom he could share his life at every level. From an early stage they started to collaborate on projects: *The Deep* was, to a large extent, designed to promote her career as an actress. Both *The Other Side of the Wind* (the title was hers) and *F For Fake* (ditto) are strongly influenced by Oja's frank and uninhibited sexuality; both, indeed, might be said to showcase it. Sensuality had never been a part of Welles's world; sex – as in *The Lady from Shanghai* (1947) – had most often been presented as problematic and disturbing. No doubt Welles's relationship with Oja was not without complexities: curiously enough, in *F For Fake* Oja is shown as the object of voyeuristic interest, either from the drivers and pedestrians ogling her in the streets (of what appears to be Paris, but is in fact Rome; another illusion), or from Picasso. But the celebration of her physical allure is unashamed and joyous.

Altogether, the film suggests a fresh wind from Welles, a rediscovery of his essential pleasure in filmmaking, and a giant stride in a new direction. He thought of it as the pioneering work in a new genre, one unique to him because it depended entirely on his personality to make it cohere. "I'm a better actor than I'm a director, and I've never had a chance to prove it," he told Bill Krohn in an interview in *Cahiers du cinéma*. "I'm very serious. I know that the thing I do best in the world is talk to audiences. And that's what confuses me and makes me think I should have been in politics, which is nonsense... my favourite mask is myself. And I feel much more at ease on the stage talking to the audience than I do pretending to be someone else. With most actors it's exactly the opposite."



This slightly odd observation – surely what he is talking about has nothing to do with acting – is nonetheless disarmingly frank in its main point: all his career, Welles had been reaching out to the public, sometimes more successfully than at others. Since the late 1930s, in radio programmes, in newspaper columns, in speeches, on television, he had always been, as he puts it, trying to talk to audiences. He had always had this compelling need to address the public *in propria persona* – in the persona, that is, of a wise, benevolent, impassioned, ironic, wayward, quizzical interlocutor. In *The Fountain of Youth*, Welles as the storyteller relates both to the action and to the audience. He is not part of the story; he is the magician, summoning up these people and making them disappear again. He is the master of ceremonies. With *F For Fake* and his invention of the essay film, he combines all his impulses: the desire to instruct, to entertain, to bewitch, to tease. In it he triumphantly effects his escape from linear narrative, which has always been his enemy.

A mark of his exhilaration in his new creation is that he curbed his natural tendency to linger over the editing process, and the final film was speedily delivered early in 1973 – although, with the usual complications which seemed to attend the release of every Welles movie, it was in fact not shown publicly for many months. It was liked, on the whole, in Europe; its reception in America was essentially one of bemusement. Yet again, Welles was taken to task for not having made a second *Citizen Kane*.

He was not to know it, but his constantly surprising champagne cocktail of a film, which he hoped would be the harbinger of a long line of similar films, was the last film he was ever to complete. The frolicsome new departure of *F For Fake* was a hop, skip and a jump to nowhere.

i Simon Callow is currently working on 'Orson Welles: Something Like a Magician', volume three of his biography. 'F for Fake' is rereleased in UK cinemas on 24 August, including a week-long run at BFI Southbank, London, from 24-31 August

'F for Fake' is strongly influenced by Oja Kodar's frank and uninhibited sexuality; indeed it might be said to showcase it

THE ART OF NOISE

Many a young British director with a critically rated revenge thriller under his belt would hop gratefully on the first plane to L.A. Not so Peter Strickland, who follows 'Katalin Varga' with a bold excursion into the world of analogue sound and the Italian giallo, 'Berberian Sound Studio'

Introduction by Nick James. Q&A by Jason Wood

There are few bolder decisions in filmmaking I've come across than that of Peter Strickland for his second feature *Berberian Sound Studio*. Three years ago Strickland made a huge impact on the international film scene when the then-unknown young outsider's feature debut *Katalin Varga* was chosen for the main Berlinale competition and turned out to be (for me at least) the most impressive film there. Not much was known about him or the film, but we soon found out that he was a teacher of English as a foreign language in Budapest, and that he'd funded the film himself out of an inheritance. Having thus made a rural rape-revenge thriller set in a melancholy Transylvanian milieu that linked it in style to some of the recent Romanian renaissance films, the question for Strickland was: what next?

A hint of the nature of his next step *Berberian Sound Studio* – a claustrophobic film drama about as far away from a narrative thriller as one can imagine – could be found in the stunning, painstaking use of sound and music in *Katalin Varga*, and in the circumstances of that film's creation. As was clear from interviews Strickland gave at the time, there was a point in the editing of *Katalin Varga* when the money ran out and he had to give up, pack up his film reels and go home. *Berberian Sound Studio* feeds off that experience of trying to make a film in a foreign land on diminishing resources. It concerns one Gilderoy (Toby Jones), a mild-mannered nature sound recordist who's summoned to Italy to work on an Italian horror-movie soundtrack. When he gets there, he gradually becomes detached from his sense of self, as working conditions prove incomprehensible to a man of his retiring nature. He doesn't understand Italian very well; there are baffling intrigues between the producers, the director and the actors; he can't get his expenses bill paid, because no-one will take responsibility. He spends his time recording witches' incantations and blood-curdling foley effects. Before long, his whole sense of reality is at stake.

Strickland's own fascination with the textures of

sound recording is obvious in the following Q&A with Jason Wood. *Berberian Sound Studio* is a timely film in that it's in love with the minutiae of the analogue film world that's vanishing at speed all around us: the tape machines, mixing boards, looping systems and physical sound-effects methods of only yesterday.

Jason Wood: How did the idea for 'Berberian Sound Studio' begin to form?

Peter Strickland: It began as a joke when I made it as a one-minute film with [experimental musicians] The Bohman Brothers in 2005. Then it came to life again a few years later when I thought about the stories behind some of the [Italian 1960s/70s] *giallo* soundtracks. Those soundtracks were very advanced for the time with their use of drone, *musique concrète*, free jazz and dissonance. The music of Bruno Maderna, Ennio Morricone and Gruppo di Improvvisazione Nuova Consonanza existed in the same high-art camp as Stockhausen, Cage or AMM, but then these guys were making money on the side composing soundtracks for B-grade horror films.

Berberian Sound Studio came out of that strange sonic no man's land between academia and exploitation. What's interesting about so many of those horror soundtracks is that people who turn their noses up at that genre would probably love the music and sound taken out of context. The same goes for people who don't like 'difficult' music – in the context of horror, people *get* Penderecki. I remember Stereolab's Tim Gane saying in an interview how the horror genre can warm people up to sonic ideas they wouldn't find palatable in a recorded context. *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre* is a really good example of phenomenally crafted *musique concrète* that many people – sadly – wouldn't accept out of its horror context.

The script just swam around that idea, but also incorporating foley and overdubs. I was attracted by how something unspeakably horrific can be so ridiculous once you take it to a foley stage. As an audience, you're caught between the sound of a woman

AURAL NIGHTMARE
The new film by Peter Strickland, below, is set in a studio in 1976, where the Goblin (Jean-Michel Van Schouwburg, above) and others are creating a horror soundtrack





being murdered and the sight of a man flapping cabbages. The two things are as far removed as you can get, and I wanted to focus on an innocent surrounded by colleagues who have been doing this for years and are completely blasé about the horror they witness.

I also wanted to make something visually quite innocent, but aurally very unpleasant. Maybe subconsciously I was inspired by one or two videos I wasn't allowed to see as a teenager. I could hear the screaming and sound effects from a video my older brother and his friends watched on one occasion. I was too young to be allowed to watch it, so I just stood outside the door and listened. That probably has a lot to do with how I got to this film.

I don't want to come across too art-school, but when you deal with the illusion of violence, you're inevitably making a reflexive piece of work that questions both an audience's consumption of it and how filmmakers represent it. The main challenge was whether filmmakers can portray violence responsibly without sensationalising it. It's a very tough question: no matter how high-minded you are, you can't control the interpretation of your images once they reach an audience. In some ways, that's why I respect some of the *giallo* directors. There's an honesty about exploitation. When some directors comment on how they wanted to show how terrible it is when someone is tortured, it either smacks of bullshit or folly.

But ultimately the one thing that excited me the most was just messing around with sound. It doesn't have much to do with effects, more to do with the power of sound to confound and deceive.

JW: I was reminded of both 'The Conversation' and 'Blow Out'. Could you talk about some of your inspirations?

PS: We took a few cues from some *giallo* films, but the film within the film fed more off the gothic horror of Bava's *Black Sunday* [1960] or Argento's *Suspria* [1976]. Music played a big part in how I thought about the film. It goes without saying that Italian horror soundtracks were essential – Morricone, Bruno Nicolai, Riz Ortolani, Stelvio Cipriani, Fabio Frizzi, Claudio Gizzi, Goblin – but there were so many ideas in records by Luc Ferrari, The Bohman Brothers, Cathy Berberian, Katalin Ladik, Jean-Michel Van Schouwburg, Luigi Nono, Jim O'Rourke,

I was inspired by videos I wasn't allowed to see as a teenager. I could hear the screaming and sound effects from a video my older brother watched

Nurse with Wound, Faust, Merzbow, Trevor Wishart, early Whitehouse, early Franco Battiato and Broadcast. The influence of all that music is felt throughout the film. Even the studio photographs found in some of the Battiato or Gruppo di Improvvisazione Nuova Consonanza albums gave clues to the atmosphere and look of the film.

The biggest influence was *The Cremator* [1969] by Juraj Herz. Superficially there is no resemblance, but the way Herz edited some of the scenes in that film was a template for us. I also got into Peter Tscherkassky in a big way. I thought avant-garde film had lost its way in the 1990s, but Tscherkassky came along and completely split the atom. Both structurally and visually, we are paying tribute to those filmmakers – or just plainly ripping them off, depending on your point of view.

JW: How did you achieve the look and feel of the film?

PS: One of the reasons I wanted to write about analogue sound is because it was so incredibly visual both in terms of the machinery and the performance aspect of splicing tape and looping it. You look at those old control rooms and they do have a very powerful, otherworldly feel: the racks full of oscillators, filters and oscilloscopes, the tape boxes and dubbing charts. There's a ritualistic and mysterious quality to it all, and the film is meant to celebrate that. With digital, there's nothing mysterious about watching someone clicking on their plug-ins.

The studio itself is a composite of different studios I visited in Hungary and the Studio di Fonologia in Milan, where some of the most interesting music happened. Cathy Berberian, Luciano Berio, Bruno Maderna, Marino Zuccheri and Luigi Nono all made incredible stuff there. We threw a long Luigi Nono sample into the film to make the nod more explicit. Jennifer Kernke, the production designer, did a great job of assimilating all those influences and making something that took the best bits out of all the studios referenced. The only problem we had was sourcing the equipment.

JW: Can you tell me more about your general approach to sound?

PS: The initial temptation with this film was to drench it in all manner of sonic effects and trickery. There would have been creative licence to do that since we're making a film about sound, but it might have been self-defeating. It felt more appropriate to hold the scope of the sound back and focus more on detail and perspective.

When you're dealing with tape machines, headphones, loudspeakers and so on, there's a lot of fun to be had in constantly shifting the sonic perspective whilst remaining completely naturalistic. On one or two occasions we cheated, but as a general rule, all the sound in the film including music is diegetic. Everything you hear is physically present coming from a machine, instrument, or whatever else is in the room. Since the narrative is a little askew, it's quite important to at least anchor the film in a sonic reality. The closest you get to being in Gilderoy's head is when he has his

RIDDLE OF THE SPHINX
Gilderoy encounters recurring frustration as he attempts to get his expenses from bored studio secretary Elena (Tonia Sotiropoulou)





THE QUIET MAN

A prolific character actor in box-office hits from 'Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy' to 'The Hunger Games', Toby Jones makes the most of a rare starring role as the sound engineer in 'Berberian Sound Studio'

By Geoffrey Macnab

BECOMING UNSPOOLED Toby Jones as sound engineer Gilderoy in 'Berberian Sound Studio'

Gilderoy, the reticent sound engineer from Dorking in Peter Strickland's *Berberian Sound Studio*, keeps his thoughts entirely to himself. It isn't a role for which the award-winning British actor Toby Jones could research a real person like Truman Capote (played by Jones in *Infamous*) or Karl Rove (in Oliver Stone's *W*) or Alfred Hitchcock (in the forthcoming BBC film *The Girl*). Gilderoy is nothing if not inscrutable, and Strickland says he largely left his actor to his own devices. So how did Jones fathom how to play the hermetic sound engineer?

Geoffrey Macnab: What initially attracted you to the part of Gilderoy?

Toby Jones: Primarily the script. These are the kind of films I used to see a lot of during my adolescence at the local arthouse at Oxford – an entirely poetic film where narrative is just one element of the film rather than the crucial element. Also, I felt a kinship: my earliest years were spent in Surrey near Dorking. Quite apart from the film being utterly intriguing, there were personal hooks as well.

GM: This must have been a very different experience to your roles in more mainstream movies such as 'Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy' or 'Infamous'?

TJ: The screenplay has its own challenges that you try to sort out before you start shooting. One is how

are you going to find an emotional through-line in an elliptical, non-narrative script. You have to invent your own logic. You have to find your own map that you're largely going to have to keep to yourself. Your director's interests, it becomes clear very quickly, aren't necessarily in your emotional journey. He is more interested in the cumulative impact of all of these cinematic elements. That work was done primarily on my own, whereas with those other films, you were working collaboratively with the director on an emotional map.

The original screenplay was split into five reels. I worked on it like a five-act play in my mind, but it would never obey those rules.

GM: How do you find the 'map' for a character who's so enigmatic?

TJ: You're playing a character whose expressive spectrum is necessarily narrow. You have to trust that in the editing suite they're going to spot minor calibrations of mood – that Peter is going to value and register that. To give him his due, he was very complimentary about how much he noticed in the edit that he hadn't spotted in the shoot.

GM: How do you explain the character's gradual mental unravelling?

TJ: The joke material is the idea that Gilderoy is cutting a film with magic spells in it – a horror film. He's fast-forwarding and rewinding. He's reliving the incantation and the spell is working on him through the editing process. Something does happen whereby he is so uprooted from anything he knows, and he is witnessing such cruelty and abuse – behaviour he has never been around.

The return ticket [to England] is the hook back into his own life – he is denied that, and so he becomes uprooted. There is a certain amount of ordered compulsive-obsessive behaviour in his apartment. He is trying to key back into what he knows.

GM: Gilderoy may be inhibited and eccentric, but is he also a visionary?

TJ: Gilderoy hears things. If you are hearing voices, there is the potential for that to become mystical. What is he hearing? Is he hearing some higher voice? That's not something I played consciously, but it's something that the actions call into question. Somehow, all this listening has led [him] to a different plane.

To find an emotional through-line in an elliptical, non-narrative script, you have to invent your own logic. You have to find your own map

GM: It's clear that you research and prepare your roles very extensively.

TJ: Yes, but all the preparation for this was to do with detective work with the script and mapping out some kind of emotional narrative for me – and noticing patterns of behaviour. It's not interesting for an audience to see you doing the same things over and over again. There has to be change. Peter then moves it around in the edit – I need to know that I've provided enough of a palette for that character to become interesting.



LOOK BACK IN ANGER
The story of a woman (Hilda Péter, left) seeking vengeance on a rapist (Tibor Pálffy, right), Strickland's debut 'Katalin Varga' was shot in Transylvania



headphones on and we just amplify what's in there.

What took the most time was making the different sonic perspectives seem believable. The screams took a lot of time, but most of that was done before the shoot. We tried to amass as many screams as we could and then send them to various sound men I knew who could make everything more aggressive or abstract. Andrew Liles gave me two CDs filled with treated screams, and after a while it started to mess with my head. I started to see how someone could go bananas listening to this stuff every day. Suzy Kendall from *The Bird with the Crystal Plumage* [1969], *Torso* [1973] and *Spasmo* [1974] came in to scream for the film and told me some very funny stories about her *giallo* days. She did all the screams for *The Bird with the Crystal Plumage*, so it felt like a blessing to have her with us.

JW: How did the British electronic band Broadcast come to be involved in the soundtrack?

PS: Broadcast were my only choice for this film. They knew all the influences inside out and had a way of summoning that sound from the past without falling into pastiche. Their former keyboardist Roj [Stevens] did some sounds for *Katalin Varga*, so he put me in touch with [Broadcast singer] Trish [Keenan] and James [Cargill] around September 2009, but it wasn't until 2010 when we started to properly talk about the soundtrack and what should and shouldn't be done. They quickly got me on the right track by playing me very obscure but beautiful records from that period. A few tracks were sent in advance of the shoot, but most of the music came in during the edit period. It was a back-and-forth process right up until the very last day of sound mixing.

Speaking purely as a fan of the band, Trish's passing is a huge loss [Keenan died in 2011]. It's not an overstatement to say that she was one of the most remarkably gifted musicians of my generation.

JW: This is the first time you've worked with a 'star' actor, in the form of Toby Jones.

PS: Toby fully immersed himself in the character and got there pretty quickly in terms of the stillness within Gilderoy. It's a very hard thing to carry a film yet remain believably nondescript, but he pulled it off. He's not a broad-stroke actor. He did small things that I barely noticed on set, but when you see it on the big screen, those little gestures reveal a whole inner life. He had already done a radio play that involved foley, so this wasn't too unfamiliar for him.

As with anyone you work with, you have your good

days and bad days. In hindsight, I probably should've spent more time talking to Toby and the other actors than constantly trying to get the correct wave pattern on the oscilloscope! It doesn't matter now. Onscreen, Toby is more Gilderoy than the Gilderoy I initially had in my head, so I have nothing but praise for him.

JW: I was intrigued by the device of the letters Gilderoy receives from home. It hints at a world beyond what we see onscreen, and a strange relationship between the Toby Jones character and his mother.

PS: The letters are an extension of the film-within-the-film idea, in that once again you are denied the sight of that other world – but this time instead of extreme horror, it's the tranquillity of Gilderoy's back garden in Dorking, which you only see once in a photograph. The letters are there to set up Gilderoy's world, but also to offer clues to later scenes. Both the letters and Gilderoy's home recordings start to intersect with the horror film, but there's a loneliness and silence there for me that puts the whole film within the right frame.

Gilderoy himself is a composite of a few people I know, but he also harks back to the days of the garden-shed sound eccentric. Even if they didn't work in sheds, you can imagine that could be the only place where [*Clangers* composer] Vernon Elliott or [electronic-music pioneer] Desmond Leslie made their recordings.

JW: Despite the tribulations you faced in completing 'Katalin Varga', it was very well received. How did making your second feature compare?

PS: If I could go back in time, I wouldn't have made *Katalin Varga*. The emotional and financial toll it took was too much. It's a vile memory apart from those few weeks of shooting, which were very beautiful in hindsight. If I think about comparing the shoots only, they are worlds apart. Almost all of *Berberian* was shot in Three Mills Studio in London. I had never even been in a studio before and it was a little intimidating at first. Eventually I got the idea that all these crew members are not on set to break my balls, but to make my life easier!

The accommodation near Three Mills was luxurious but soulless. At least I didn't have to share a bed with my cameraman this time – which might explain why I got on better with Nic Knowland than with my previous cameraman. Saying that, part of me misses the chaos of the *Varga* sleeping arrangements. There's a comfort to be had in the snoring around you.

i 'Berberian Sound Studio' is released in the UK on 31 August, and is reviewed on page 86

fresh produce

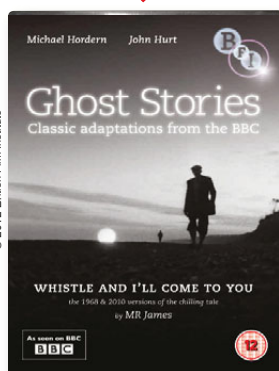
suck it and see: buy your cds, dvds & books from fopp – if they suck we'll give you a swap or your lolly*

**bristol college green // cambridge sidney st //
edinburgh rose st // glasgow union st & byres rd //
london covent garden & gower st //
manchester brown st // nottingham queen st**

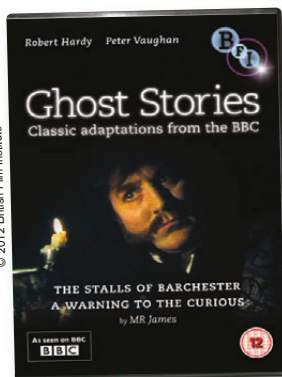


*This offer applies to all cds, dvds and books instore and is only available on production of a valid receipt dated no more than four weeks from the time of your original purchase. Goods must be in the condition as sold, both the sleeve/case, disc or spine/pages. We reserve the right to refuse this offer. This offer in no way affects your statutory right. Titles subject to availability, while stocks last. Individual titles which appear elsewhere in the store, outside of this campaign, may be priced differently.

**ghost stories vol. 1
released 20/08/12 £10**



© 2012 British Film Institute



© 2012 British Film Institute

**ghost stories vol. 2
released 20/08/12 £10**

**the island president
released 20/08/12 £8**



© 2011 Afterimage Public Media

**war & revolution
released 13/08/12 £8**



© 2012 Arrow Films



© 2012 Piccadilly Pictures

**north sea texas
subtitled/dutch £8**

**even the rain
subtitled/spanish
released 13/08/12 £8**



twitter.com/foppofficial



Intellect journals

www.intellectbooks.com

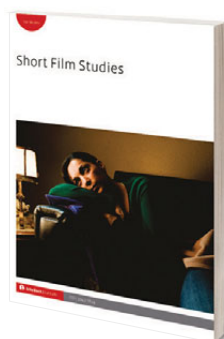
**PUBLISHERS
OF ORIGINAL
THINKING**



Journal of Screenwriting

2013, Volume 4
3 issues per year
ISSN 1759-7137
Online ISSN 1759-7145

Principal Editor
Jill Nelmes
University of East London



Short Film Studies

2013, Volume 3
2 issues per year
ISSN 2042-7824
Online ISSN 2042-7832

Editor
Richard Raskin
Aarhus University



Journal of African Cinemas

2013, Volume 5
2 issues per year
ISSN 1754-9221
Online ISSN 1754-923X

Editors
Keyan G. Tomaselli
University of KwaZulu-Natal

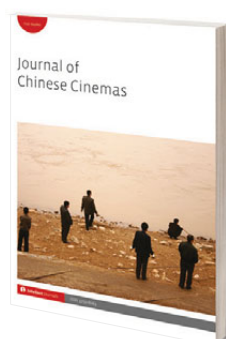
Martin Mhando
Murdoch University



Film, Fashion & Consumption

2013, Volume 2
3 issues per year
ISSN 2044-2823
Online ISSN 2044-2831

Principal Editor
Pamela Church Gibson
University of the Arts London

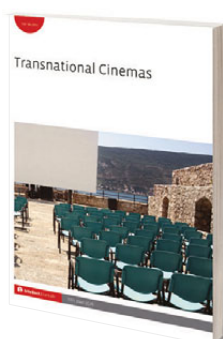


Journal of Chinese Cinemas

2013, Volume 7
3 issues per year
ISSN 1750-8061
Online ISSN 1750-807X

Editor
Song Hwee Lim
University of Exeter

Associate Editor
Julian Ward
University of Edinburgh



Transnational Cinemas

2013, Volume 4
2 issues per year
ISSN 2040-3526
Online ISSN 2040-3534

Editors
Armida de la Garza
Xi'an Jiaotong/Liverpool University

Deborah Shaw
University of Portsmouth
Ruth Doughty
University of Portsmouth

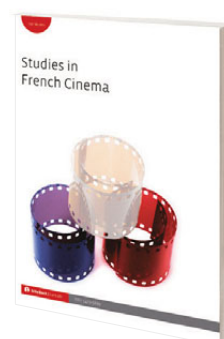


Asian Cinema

2013, Volume 24
2 issues per year
ISSN 1059-440X
Online ISSN 2049-6710

Editors
Gary Bettinson
Lancaster University

Tan See Kam
University of Macau
tsktan@umac.mo



Studies in French Cinema

2013, Volume 13
3 issues per year
ISSN 1471-5880
Online ISSN 1758-9517

Founding Editor
Susan Hayward

Chief General Editor
Phil Powrie
University of Surrey



Intellect is an independent academic publisher of books and journals, to view our catalogue or order our titles visit www.intellectbooks.com or E-mail: orders@intellectbooks.com. Intellect, The Mill, Parnall Road, Fishponds, Bristol, UK, BS16 3JG. Telephone: +44 (0) 117 9589910.

THE GREATEST FILMS OF ALL TIME

Over the following 30 pages we reveal and analyse the results of our critics' and directors' polls



THE



RESULTS





To most readers it's probably a familiar story. Every ten years, from 1952 onwards, this magazine has conducted a worldwide poll of critics in order to decide which films are currently regarded as the greatest ever made. We're proud that the longevity of this poll means that it's widely regarded as the most trusted guide there is to the canon of cinema greats. So for us it's a very big moment – the biggest *Sight & Sound* enjoys.

Sixty years ago, Vittorio De Sica's neorealist parable *Bicycle Thieves* won the first poll only four years after it was shot. In today's era of digital plenitude, it's hard to imagine how critics could be so sure they had recently seen the greatest film ever made, but of course in those days there were vastly fewer films to measure *Bicycle Thieves* against than there are today. Famously, *Citizen Kane* won the next five polls, up to and including the last one in 2002. Orson Welles's film had the disadvantage in 1952 of not yet having been seen by a lot of Europeans because of World War II. If they had been able to see it, it might even have won then. So *Citizen Kane* is the critics' all-time champion movie thus far.

I'm not going to reveal here whether it has won for the sixth time in succession. You'll have to turn a few pages to find out. What I want to explain here are some changes of rationale behind this year's poll, so that the complete lists and commentaries we'll be posting online – and the 100 critics' lists that appear overleaf – make sense.

About a year ago, the *S&S* team met to consider how we could best approach the poll this time. Given the dominance of electronic media, what was immediately apparent was that we would have to abandon the somewhat elitist exclusivity with which contributors to the poll had been chosen in the past and reach out to a much wider international group of commentators. We were also keen to include among them critics who'd established their careers online rather than purely in print.

To that end we approached more than 1000 critics, programmers, academics, distributors, writers and other cinephiles, and received (in time for the deadline)

precisely 846 top-ten lists that between them mention a total of 2045 different films. This makes the process a little more democratic, though I can't pretend that the 1000 or so individuals were selected by any more rigorous process than simple chains of recommendation. (The 2002 critics' poll, by contrast, was based on just 145 lists.) Each entry on each list counts as one vote for the film in question, so personal rankings within the individual top tens don't matter. And one important rule change compared to 2002 was that *The Godfather* and *The Godfather Part II* would no longer be accepted as a single choice, since they were made as two separate films. As a qualification of what 'greatest' means, our invitation letter stated, "We leave that open to your interpretation. You might choose the ten films you feel are most important to film history, or the ten that represent the aesthetic pinnacles of achievement, or indeed the ten films that have had the biggest impact on your own view of cinema."

The task proved more gargantuan than I had imagined. Databases were constructed to allow us to mine as much rich information as possible from the lists. What the increase in numbers has – and hasn't – done is surprising. We had hopes that some 21st-century films might break into top-flight contention; this has not been the case. Instead, what we have achieved is a consensus on what represents 'great cinema' that now has a greater force of numbers behind it. Another fascinating result is that we now have a plausible *Sight & Sound* 'Top 100', which you can view on p.56.

Since 1992, we have also conducted a separate directors' poll, which likewise has been dominated by *Citizen Kane*. Leaving to one side what's number one this time, I can say that you'll find a pronounced difference between the filmmakers' top tens and those of the critics. Around 350 directors (we're still chasing some as I write) have contributed, of whom 100 are included in the pages overleaf. We hope you enjoy this initial rummage, but perhaps the real fun will come when every list and comment is available online from 15 August. **Nick James**

CRITICS' POLL

Please note: the 100 sample entries below represent just a few edited highlights of the 846 voting entries we received for the 2012 Critics' Poll. The full interactive versions will be posted online on 15 August at bfi.org.uk/sightsoundpoll2012

TARIQ ALI

Pakistan/UK, writer
Charulata (S. Ray)
The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie (Buñuel)
The Battle of Algiers (Pontecorvo)
Tout va bien (Godard)
Osaka Elegy (Mizoguchi)
Rashomon (Kurosawa)
The Puppetmaster (Hou)
If.... (Anderson)
Entranced Earth/Terra am transe (Rocha)
Crimson Gold (Panahi)

GEOFF ANDREW

UK, head of film programme, BFI
 Southbank
The General (Keaton & Bruckman)
L'Atalante (Vigo)
His Girl Friday (Hawks)
Citizen Kane (Welles)
Tokyo Story (Ozu)
Ordet (Dreyer)
Persona (Bergman)
My Night with Maud (Rohmer)
10 (Kiarostami)
La Morte Rouge (Eric)
 A top ten might have sufficed in 1952, but 60 years on we need a top 20. I know it's always been difficult to narrow one's list down, but we have so many more great films to choose from now.

Though I've always voted for Welles in such polls, this is the first time I've opted for *Citizen Kane*. I used to be a bit perverse about it, preferring the warmth of *The Magnificent Ambersons*, the B-movie bravura of *Touch of Evil*, the mischievous magic of *F for Fake*. But in the last decade, even more than before, I've watched this first feature many times, and each time, it reveals new treasures. Clearly, no single film is the greatest ever made. But if there were one, for me *Kane* would now be the strongest contender, bar none.

MICHAEL ATKINSON

US, critic
Aguirre, Wrath of God (Herzog)
L'Atalante (Vigo)
Blue Velvet (Lynch)
Céline and Julie Go Boating (Rivette)
Citizen Kane (Welles)
Late Spring (Ozu)
A Man Escaped (Bresson)
Pierrot le fou (Godard)
La Règle du jeu (Renoir)

Sherlock Jr. (Keaton)

How would the final results change if the poll's ten-votes-per-list metric took on, say, lists of 20 or even 30 selections? Would it make a more pertinent list? Hard to say; I just wanted to list more, dammit.

CAMERON BAILEY

Canada, artistic director, Toronto International Film Festival
Vertigo (Hitchcock)
Sans soleil (Marker)
Histoire(s) du cinéma (Godard)
Man with a Movie Camera (Dziga Vertov)
A One and a Two (Yang)
Apocalypse Now (Coppola)
In the Mood for Love (Wong)
Touki-Bouki (Mambéty)
Taxi Driver (Scorsese)
A History of Violence (Cronenberg)

LUCIANO BARISONE

Italy/Switzerland, Director Visions du Réel
Tabu (Murnau & Flaherty)
Citizen Kane (Welles)
The World of Apu (S. Ray)
Tokyo Story (Ozu)
Journey to Italy (Rossellini)
The 400 Blows (Truffaut)
Breathless (Godard)
La dolce vita (Fellini)
Easy Rider (Hopper)
The Last Bolshevik (Marker)
 I chose not according to some rational and calculated criteria but spontaneously, like someone who was recalling some of his favourite souvenirs or – if you prefer – as a psychoanalyst's client involved in a word-association test. I don't know why I chose these films: the best films are in the thousands and I don't really

In the last decade, even more than before, I've watched 'Citizen Kane' many times, and each time it reveals new treasures

Geoff Andrew

believe that life is a hierarchical system, but rather a collective one.

I probably chose them because they revealed something closely connected to my own intimate reality. I belong to a generation who was born in the 1950s – that's why you don't find any new film in my list.

RUTH BARTON

Ireland, head of department of film studies, Trinity College, Dublin
The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse (Ingram)
The Night of the Hunter (Laughton)
Stalker (Tarkovsky)
Exotica (Egoyan)
The Red Shoes (Powell & Pressburger)
Brief Encounter (Lean)
Citizen Kane (Welles)
Rashomon (Kurosawa)
Pépé le Moko (Duviols)
10 (Kiarostami)
 My choice was guided firstly by my own taste, most of all for a visual cinema that offers, through its images, pleasures of a kind that invite you to return over and again to them. I also selected films that seemed to me to have made a difference, artistically, historically, politically.

RAYMOND BELLOUR

France, critic and theorist
La Jétée (Marker)
Hiroshima mon amour (Resnais)
Sunrise: A Song of Two Humans (Murnau)
Miss Oyu/Oyu-Sama (Mizoguchi)
The Birds (Hitchcock)
La Règle du jeu (Renoir)
The Cloud-Capped Star (Ghatak)
Dr Mabuse the Gambler (Lang)
Tokyo Story (Ozu)
Au hasard Balthazar (Bresson)
 I find my list pretty ridiculous – so many other titles come to mind. Its only justification is that these titles are some of the films that have counted the most in my relation to cinema and the development of my theoretical work. (The order is aleatory).

STIG BJÖRKMAN

Sweden, filmmaker & writer
L'avventura (Antonioni)
Vertigo (Hitchcock)
In the Mood for Love (Wong)
Le Mépris (Godard)
In a Lonely Place (N. Ray)
Touch of Evil (Welles)
The Night of the Hunter (Laughton)
Elephant (Van Sant)
Persona (Bergman)
Melancholia (von Trier)
 For every decade that passes, the choice becomes more and more difficult. They don't stop making films! So, this time maybe not the ten best films ever, but films I can (and do) see over and over again with the same, or increasing pleasure. (Well, *Melancholia* I've only seen twice so far, but I'm certain we'll meet again...)

So, five unhappy or unfulfilled romances, three tales of evil and two Nordic introspections. What does that say about me?

PETER BRADSHAW

UK, critic, 'The Guardian'
I Am Cuba (Kalatozov)
The Addiction (Ferrara)
Raging Bull (Scorsese)
Andrei Rublev (Tarkovsky)
Kind Hearts and Coronets (Hamer)
Singin' in the Rain (Donen & Kelly)
In the Mood for Love (Wong)
Hidden (Haneke)
Annie Hall (Allen)
Black Narcissus (Powell & Pressburger)

ANCHALEE CHAIWORAPORN

Thailand, critic and researcher
Breathless (Godard)
The Piano (Campion)
In the Realm of the Senses (Oshima)
Rashomon (Kurosawa)
Yellow Earth (Chen)
Bicycle Thieves (De Sica)
The 400 Blows (Truffaut)
The Spirit of the Beehive (Erice)
Citizen Kane (Welles)
Uncle Boonmee Who Can Recall His Past Lives (Weerasethakul)
 As an academic, a critic, a woman and a film buff, my selections are based on the films' achievements in developing film theories, new cinematic languages, social identification – and on my personal enjoyment. The top one combines all these elements.

JUSTIN CHANG

US, senior film critic, 'Variety'
Chungking Express (Wong)
Flowers of Shanghai (Hou)
The Godfather Part II (Coppola)
The Lady Eve (Sturges)
Meet Me in St. Louis (Minnelli)
La Règle du jeu (Renoir)
Rio Bravo (Hawks)
Sansho dayu (Mizoguchi)
Sunrise: A Song of Two Humans (Murnau)
Vertigo (Hitchcock)

PEGGY CHIAO

Taiwan, producer, professor, film-festival chair, writer
Amarcord (Fellini)
Battleship Potemkin (Eisenstein)
Citizen Kane (Welles)
A City of Sadness (Hou)
The Godfather (Coppola)
La Règle du jeu (Renoir)
The Searchers (Ford)
Seven Samurai (Kurosawa)
Tokyo Story (Ozu)
Vertigo (Hitchcock)
 I chose them not only because they represent the milestones of film history, but also because they are the films that I can watch again and again and never get tired of. Even though I know all of them by heart – each line and each frame – they still move me each time in different parts. As I grow older, my readings of them may change slightly, but my love for them has never changed.

IAN CHRISTIE

UK, critic and film historian, Birkbeck, University of London
 Not in any special order, except how I wrote them down:
A Matter of Life and Death (Powell & Pressburger)

Casino (Scorsese)

The '7' Motorist (Paul)
A Diary for Timothy (Jennings)
Rainbow Dance (Lye)
Ivan the Terrible (Eisenstein)
The Sun (Sokurov)
Le Mépris (Godard)
Sunrise: A Song of Two Humans (Murnau)
Tokyo Story (Ozu)
 I didn't look at my last choice of ten years ago, but I think this is almost the same, apart from Sokurov and Ozu butting in. I wonder if this is influenced by having been in Japan last year. I also notice that the music of *Le Mépris* is quoted in *Casino*, which may reveal some subterranean connection.

There's a great deal wrong with this list: I've simply baulked at selecting from the riches of Hitchcock, despite becoming more and more interested in his work as a whole. Likewise Ford: how to choose from such a career (but I do feel it's time to treat *The Searchers* as the obvious canon Ford, and pay more attention to earlier work). And what about Lang (especially after seeing the magnificent restoration of *Metropolis*) and Renoir? And Bergman and Antonioni, both dying at the same moment: how could any self-respecting list of the ten greatest omit these?

MICHEL CIMENT

France, editor, 'Positif'
2001: A Space Odyssey (Kubrick)
Casanova (Fellini)
Persona (Bergman)
Providence (Resnais)
Sunrise: A Song of Two Humans (Murnau)
Madame de... (Max Ophüls)
La Règle du jeu (Renoir)
Salvatore Giuliano (Rosi)
Sansho dayu (Mizoguchi)
Trouble in Paradise (Lubitsch)
 The latest film mentioned is from 1977 – I deliberately wanted to include works that have stood the test of time. Also, the first half of my list is composed of films in which imagination (today much underprivileged) plays a central role. The second half is more related to a realistic approach, however arbitrary the distinction may seem.

RICHARD CORLISS

US, critic, 'Time'
Chungking Express (Wong)
Citizen Kane (Welles)
The Lady Eve (Sturges)
Histoire(s) du cinéma (Godard)
Mouchette (Bresson)
Psycho (Hitchcock)
Pyaaas (Dutt)
The Searchers (Ford)
The Seventh Seal (Bergman)
WALL-E (Stanton)
 Six of my ten selections were made between 1941 and 1967, though on three continents. These aren't simply demonstrations of loyalty to movies I loved in my youth, but also an argument that most films of the last half-century have been variations on earlier models, whose surpassing audacity and craft they cannot match.





MARK COUSINS

UK, critic, and documentarist

The Insect Woman (Imamura)
Distant Voices, Still Lives (Davies)
Eureka (Roeig)
Come and See (Klimov)
Kaagaz Ke Phool/Paper Flowers (Dutt)
The Apartment (Wildier)
A Moment of Innocence (M. Makhmalbaf)
The House Is Black (Farrokhzad)
La Maman et la Putain (Eustache)
Minimata: The Victims and their World (Tsushimoto)

I bang on about film aesthetics, about formal innovation, and yet in my list of ten films, what do I see? People rather than style. Lonely, resilient people. Even Jack Lemmon in *The Apartment* is lonely. Taken together, my first five choices could teach much of what there is to know about film style, but look at the last three: black-and-white heartbreakers. *A Moment of Innocence* is very funny.

MANOHLA DARGIS

US, critic, 'The New York Times'

Au hasard Balthazar (Bresson)
Barry Lyndon (Kubrick)
Flowers of Shanghai (Hou)
The Flowers of St. Francis (Rossellini)
The Godfather Part II (Coppola)
Little Stabs at Happiness (Jacobs)
Masculin féminin (Godard)
There Will Be Blood (P.T. Anderson)
Touch of Evil (Welles)
The Wizard of Oz (Fleming)

These are not the ten greatest films, but rather ten that made me look at cinema, the world and my life differently. That makes this list somewhat nostalgic.

Here are some reasons why I came up with this list today: Balthazar wearing a crown of flowers and dying among the sheep. The candlelight, 'Sarabande' (Handel) and the 'Women of Ireland' (Seán O Riada) in *Barry Lyndon*. The camera moving across the pale faces and shadows in the opening of *Flowers of Shanghai* – the first of 39 shots in the film. Saint Francis shushing the birds so that God can hear him while he prays ("My little brothers, you can praise God so easily, because you're free to fly through the air so pure."). The parallel structure of *The Godfather Part II*, with Vito ascending and Michael descending; the way the young Clemenza stands pointing his gun at the silhouette of a policeman, evoking the codified gestures in silent cinema and underlining Coppola's two other histories (the Corleone's, cinema's). Jack Smith in the bathtub in *Little Stabs at Happiness* and Ken Jacobs in voiceover ("Almost no one in this film do I see anymore"). "This wasn't the film we dreamed of," the doomed boy says in *Masculin féminin*. "This wasn't the total film that each of us had carried within himself [sic], the film that we wanted to make or, more secretly, no doubt, that we wanted to live."

The cinematographer Robert Elswit said that while shooting *There Will Be Blood* he and director Paul Thomas Anderson looked

I bang on about film aesthetics, about formal innovation, yet in my list, what do I see? People rather than style. Lonely, resilient people

Mark Cousins

at traditional film dailies rather than so-called digital dailies. In explaining the benefits of film dailies, Elswit provided an inadvertent explanation of why so many contemporary studio and independent movies look so bad: with film dailies "you can't kid yourself about focus and all the other technical issues that can come back to bite you later when you go to do an IP [interpositive]. Or when you make a digital file into a negative, and you find out that those ten shots you sort of saw sharply with your D5 or HD dailies really weren't that sharp at all. And then, of course, the color space of motion picture film is completely different than digital color space."

In *Touch of Evil*, the camera travelling across the border with both the newlywed Mr and Mrs Vargas and the blonde with "this ticking in my head"/ Henry Mancini/ Charlton Heston striding across the screen like the Colossus of Rhodes and Orson Welles looming in it like a colossus of cinema/the overhead shot of Vargas driving/Dietrich lighting a cigar (evoking von Sternberg) and eulogising Hank Quinlan (suggesting Welles).

Growing up in New York in the 1960s and 70s, my family only had a black-and-white TV, so wow, was I surprised when I first saw *The Wizard of Oz* in colour!

STÉPHANE DELORME

France, editor in chief, 'Cahiers du cinéma'

Vertigo (Hitchcock)
Au hasard Balthazar (Bresson)
La Maman et la Putain (Eustache)
L'Enfant secret (Garrel)
Mulholland Dr. (Lynch)
The Saga of Anatahan (von Sternberg)
Pierrot le fou (Godard)
Splendor in the Grass (Kazan)
The Woman Who Dared/Le ciel est à vous (Grémillon)
L'Atlante (Vigo)

DAVID DENBY

US, critic, 'The New Yorker'

Citizen Kane (Welles)
La Règle du jeu (Renoir)
L'avventura (Antonioni)
The Godfather Part II (Coppola)
Vertigo (Hitchcock)
Seven Samurai (Kurosawa)
Sunrise: A Song of Two Humans (Murnau)
The Life of Oharu (Mizoguchi)
Journey to Italy (Rossellini)
The Tree of Life (Malick)

MAR DIESTRO-DÓPIDO

Spain/UK, 'Sight & Sound'

Mulholland Dr. (Lynch)
Un chien andalou (Buñuel)
Werckmeister Harmonies (Tarr)
Je t'aime, je t'aime (Resnais)
8½ (Fellini)
Repulsion (Polanski)
Solaris (Tarkovsky)
Le Pont des Arts (E. Green)
Arrebato (Zulueta)
Amanece, que no es poco (Cuerda)

What attracts me most about cinema is its capacity to reveal the surreal and the fantastic within a recognisable reality – to create an extrasensory depth that's more in tune with the way we experience our lives (or 'real', if you like). It is this trait that for me elevates cinema to the category of an art. The link between my ten films is a conscious foregrounding of the mind's processes – explored by the medium ever since its origins, and most famously by the Surrealists – which irremediably takes us back to the central tenet of Calderón de la Barca's 1635 play *Life Is a Dream*. That titular precept undoubtedly permeates all of my choices.

GEOFF DYER

UK, writer

The Big Sleep (Hawks)
Bringing up Baby (Hawks)
The Clock (Marclay)
Koyaanisqatsi (Reggio)
The Maltese Falcon (Huston)
Mirror (Tarkovsky)
Point Blank (Boorman)
Stalker (Tarkovsky)
Taxi Driver (Scorsese)
Where Eagles Dare (Hutton)

I can't detect any logic or defining idea of what I want from a film in this list. They're just the films that insisted on popping into my head. The neon of their titles flashed brightest among the hundreds of others vying for my attention. The two Tarkovsky films, *Mirror* and *Stalker*, have a primal power and profundity that is unmatched by any of the others. If I had to choose just one it would be Christian Marclay's *The Clock*.

ROGER EBERT

US, critic, 'Chicago Sun-Times'

Aguires, Wrath of God (Herzog)
Apocalypse Now (Coppola)
Citizen Kane (Welles)
La dolce vita (Fellini)
The General (Keaton & Bruckman)
Raging Bull (Scorsese)
2001: A Space Odyssey (Kubrick)
The Tree of Life (Malick)
Tokyo Story (Ozu)
Vertigo (Hitchcock)

At one point in pondering this list, here's what I thought I would do: I would simply start over with ten new films. But it was too much like a stunt. Lists are ridiculous, but if you're going to vote, you have to play the game. Besides, the thought of starting with a blank page and a list of all the films ever made fills me with despair.

So I decided there must be one new film. The two candidates, for me, were Charlie Kaufman's *Synecdoche, New York* and Terrence Malick's *The Tree of Life*. Like the Herzog, the Kubrick and

the Coppola, they are films of almost foolhardy ambition. Like many of the films on my list, they were directed by the artist who wrote them. Like several of them, they attempt no less than to tell the story of an entire life. I could have chosen either film – I chose *The Tree of Life* because it's more affirmative and hopeful.

BERNARD EISENSCHITZ

France, film historian and translator.

The Birth of a Nation (Griffith)
From the Clouds to the Resistance/Dalla nube alla resistenza (Straub-Huillet)
Gertrud (Dreyer)
M (Lang)
Monsieur Verdoux (Chaplin)
The River (Renoir)
The Life of Oharu (Mizoguchi)
Seven Women (Ford)
By the Bluest of Seas (Barnet & Mardanian)
The Wedding March (von Stroheim)

'Greatest films' is fine, but 'of all time' sounds like a somewhat pretentious definition, regarding an art that's been in existence for less than 150 years. Even so, nobody can claim to be totally knowledgeable – I certainly can't. My emotional responses to, and rational appraisals of, films are limited in time and space – even though I've tried to cover as many of them as I could here, mostly imaginary, from Griffith's Confederate States of America to Renoir's India. This, then, is what this list can be at best: a reminder of a history that runs a serious risk of being entirely forgotten soon.

THOMAS P. ELSAESSER

Netherlands, University of Amsterdam

All-time classics in no particular order:
Metropolis (Lang)
La Règle du jeu (Renoir)
Citizen Kane (Welles)
The Searchers (Ford)
Ugetsu monogatari (Mizoguchi)

Modern classics:
The Marriage of Maria Braun (Fassbinder)
Blade Runner (Scott)
Pulp Fiction (Tarantino)
Pierrot le fou (Godard)
A Taste of Cherry (Kiarostami)

FERRONI BRIGADE

Aka Christoph Huber, Olaf Möller and Barbara Wurm, Austria/Germany, critics

The Effects of the Atomic Bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki (Ito)
It Will Never Happen Again

In the 1960s, my family only had a black-and-white TV, so wow, was I surprised when I first saw 'The Wizard of Oz' in colour

Manohla Dargis

Unzere Kinder (Gross)
The Long Gray Line (Ford)
The Plague of the Zombies (Gilling)
Echo of the Jackboot (Román)
79 Springtimes (Álvarez)
Essene (Wiseman)
The Age of Cosimo de Medici (Rossellini)
Everyday Life in a Syrian Village (Amiralay)
The Memory of Justice (Marcel Ophüls)

We don't believe that these are the ten greatest films of all time, but we are convinced that it would be better if they were.

SCOTT FOUNDAS

US, critic and associate director of programming at the Film Society of Lincoln Center

Diary of a Country Priest (Bresson)
The Shop Around the Corner (Lubitsch)
Pierrot le fou (Godard)
Citizen Kane (Welles)
The Godfather Part II (Coppola)
Céline and Julie Go Boating (Rivette)
The Passion of Joan of Arc (Dreyer)
Night of the Living Dead (Romero)
In a Lonely Place (N. Ray)
The Wind Will Carry Us (Kiarostami)

A fool's errand, as others have noted. Even as I submit this list (electronically), my jacket pockets are stuffed with scraps of hotel notepaper with dozens of other possible titles scribbled on them, not least *Andrei Rublev*, *A Brighter Summer Day*, *The Killing of a Chinese Bookie*, *Lost, Lost, Lost and Syndromes and a Century*. What do these and the other titles above have in common? Nothing except that they opened my own mind – and many others' – to new possibilities in cinema, and continue to do so each time I revisit them. No matter what the word 'cinema' connotes by the next edition of this poll, I feel sure they will remain with us, forever in the firmament.

CHRISTOPHER FRAYLING

UK, writer, critic and broadcaster.

Nosferatu (Murnau)
Battleship Potemkin (Eisenstein)
Citizen Kane (Welles)
Tokyo Story (Ozu)
The Searchers (Ford)
Some Like It Hot (Wildier)
Psycho (Hitchcock)
The Battle of Algiers (Pontecorvo)
Lawrence of Arabia (Lean)
Once upon a Time in the West (Leone)

PHILIP FRENCH

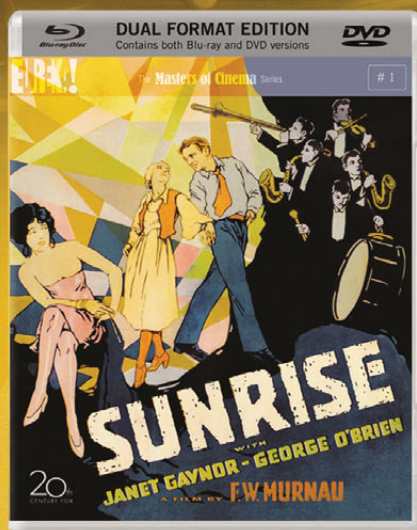
UK, critic, 'The Observer'

Listed alphabetically:
Au revoir les enfants (Malle)
La Grande Illusion (Renoir)
Kind Hearts and Coronets (Hamer)
The Leopard (Visconti)
Meet Me in St. Louis (Minnelli)
Pather Panchali (S. Ray)
Seven Samurai (Kurosawa)
Stagecoach (Ford)
Vertigo (Hitchcock)
Wild Strawberries (Bergman)

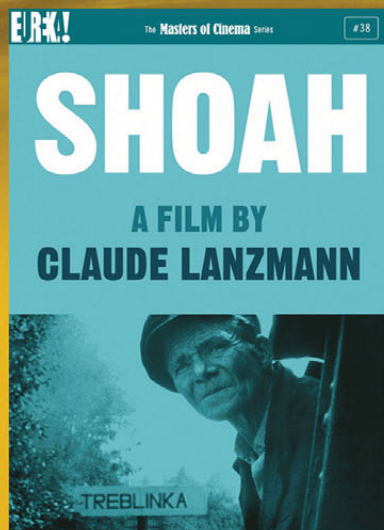


The **Masters of Cinema** Series

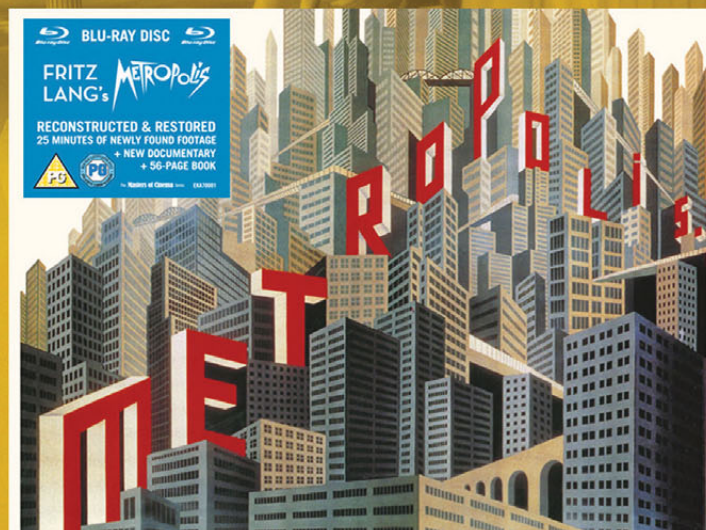
DISCOVER SOME OF THE GREATEST FILMS OF ALL TIME



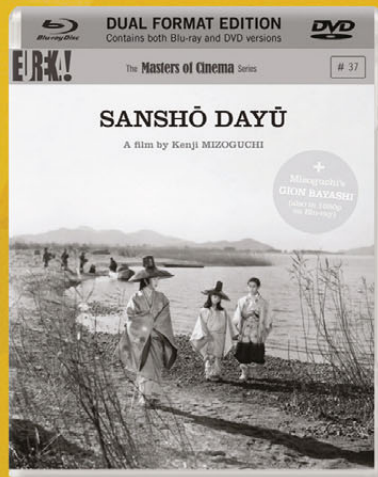
F.W. MURNAU



CLAUDE LANZMANN



FRITZ LANG



KENJI MIZOGUCHI



ORSON WELLES



FRITZ LANG



KENJI MIZOGUCHI

EUREKA!

Full details at: mastersofcinema.org

The **Masters of Cinema** Series is a specially curated Blu-ray and DVD collection of classic and world cinema using the finest available materials for home viewing.

All available from:
amazon.co.uk



Except for the Renoir, I saw all these films when they opened, and they've become part of the fabric of my life. The absence of Lang, Hawks, Ozu, Mann, Tavernier, Mizoguchi, Antonioni, Donen, Welles, Wilder, Carné, Truffaut, Peckinpah, Powell, Losey, Scorsese, Leigh and a dozen others is a cause for sadness.

JEAN-MICHEL FRODON

France, critic

In chronological order:

Sunrise: A Song of Two Humans (Murnau)
Atlantide (Vigo)
M (Lang)
Singin' in the Rain (Donen & Kelly)
The Searchers (Ford)
Vivre sa vie (Godard)
Shoah (Lanzmann)
Close-Up (Kiarostami)
Still Life (Jia)
Uncle Boonmee Who Can Recall His Past Lives (Weerasethakul)

It's only with shame and modesty one can send such a list. Shame that there is no Hou Hsiao-Hsien, no Eisenstein, no Resnais, no Bergman, no Ozu, no *The Magnificent Ambersons*, *Greed*, *The Great Dictator*, *Antichrist*, *Avatar* or *Out One*, modesty, because obviously one week earlier or later my list would have been different – and also without these other titles I dishonestly just added. But lists are good anyway: they have effects, and hopefully positive effects, though in unpredictable ways. This is why we should keep making them.

FU HONGXING

China, Director of China Film Archive

A Tale of the Wind (Ivens)
Intolerance (Griffith)
The Adventures of Prince Achmed (Reiniger)
Spring in a Small Town (Fei)
Rashomon (Kurosawa)
Wild Strawberries (Bergman)
L'avventura (Antonioni)
Andrei Rublev (Tarkovsky)
Once upon a Time in America (Leone)
Farewell My Concubine (Chen)
Spring in a Small Town is absolutely the best Chinese film ever – the most successful drama film that embodies Eastern philosophy and Chinese sentimentalism.
Farewell My Concubine is a miniature of China's history from the 1930s to the 1970s. This film has become the key to understand Chinese society.

CHRIS FUJIWARA

US/UK, artistic director, Edinburgh International Film Festival

Some Came Running (Minnelli)
The Lustful Men (N. Ray)
Memories of Murder (Bong)
North by Northwest (Hitchcock)
My Night with Maud (Rohmer)
Equinox Flower (Ozu)
Osaka Elegy (Mizoguchi)
Floating Clouds (Naruse)
Man's Favorite Sport? (Hawks)
The Engagement (Olm)
I fidanzati (Olm)

As quickly as I could, I listed ten great films that I knew well, had seen many times, and thought I could watch for years to come

with pleasure and with new discoveries to make each viewing. Then I put the list away. A few days later I took it out, changed a few things, and put it away again. A few days after that, it still seemed OK, so that's my list.

SERGIO GRMEK GERMANI

Italy, critic and archivist

The list follows the alphabetical order of the original titles – and I see this becomes also the most logical order:
The Bells of St. Mary's (McCarey)
The House Is Black (Farrokhzad)
Wings (Shepikto)
Lilith (Rossen)
A Matter of Time (Minnelli)
This Night/Nuit de chien (Schroeter)
The Shadow/L'ombra (Bianchi)
Ordet (Dreyer)
Paisà (Rossellini)
La Sortie des usines
Lumière (Lumière)

I decided not to consider historical importance, chronological and geographical proportions; I don't underrate the periods of film history and the territories left out, and it pained me to miss out any Filipino film or many silent masterpieces, and some of my most beloved directors, from Griffith, Dwan, Laurel and Hardy, Murnau through Genina, Cottafavi, Fisher to Munk, Ghatak, Tormes. The only representative rule I accepted was not to list more than one title by director.

The choice was finally on the most indispensable films to live with every day – the ones that better tell to me what is cinema.

RYAN GILBEY

UK, critic, 'New Statesman'

McCabe and Mrs Miller (Altman)
The Godfather Part II (Coppola)
The Thin Red Line (Malick)
Accattone (Pasolini)
Groundhog Day (Ramis)
Barry Lyndon (Kubrick)
Safe (Haynes)
Touki-Bouki (Mambéty)
The Palm Beach Story (Sturges)
Thirty-Two Short Films About Glenn Gould (Girard)

ANNE GJELSVIK

Norway, professor in film studies, Norwegian University of Science and Technology

Apocalypse Now (Coppola)
The Best Years of Our Lives (Wyler)
Brief Encounter (Lean)

I added 'The Passion of Joan of Arc' because Falconetti got under my skin completely when I saw Dreyer's film again recently

Nick James

City Lights (Chaplin)
The Godfather (Coppola)
Once upon a Time in the West (Leone)
The Passion of Joan of Arc (Dreyer)

La Règle du jeu (Renoir)
The Spirit of the Beehive (Erice)
Wild Strawberries (Bergman)
A list without Werner Herzog, Alfred Hitchcock, Terrence Malick and Wim Wenders – all among my favourite directors – and without any female directors; how is this even possible? Having to select only ten movies was harder than I imagined. However, aside from a somewhat melodramatic touch. I think the list does credit to the diversity that describes great filmmaking: the wonder of love, the terror of war, remembering what it's like to be a child, learning what it means to become old, the coldness of loneliness or, how unfulfilled love can be meaningful.

PIERS HANDLING

Canada, director, Toronto International Film Festival

Sunrise: A Song of Two Humans (Murnau)
Man with a Movie Camera (Dziga Vertov)
Vertigo (Hitchcock)
Pierrot le fou (Godard)
Au hasard Balthazar (Bresson)
Late Spring (Ozu)
Fort Apache (Ford)
Days and Nights in the Forest (S. Ray)
L'eclisse (Antonioni)
Viridiana (Buñuel)

Almost impossible to justify a selection of ten films anymore. No Renoir, Hawks, Mizoguchi, Rossellini, Chaplin, Tarkovsky on the list – and no film later than 1970! These selections are highly personal, and include films that spoke to me because they either broke rules and expanded possibilities within cinema, or continue to move and stimulate me after every re-screening.

MOLLY HASKELL

US, author and critic

Madame de... (Max Ophüls)
The Shop Around the Corner (Lubitsch)
Au hasard Balthazar (Bresson)
I Know Where I'm Going! (Powell & Pressburger)
Claire's Knee (Rohmer)
Vertigo (Hitchcock)
A nos amours (Pialat)
The Awful Truth (McCarey)
Chinatown (Polanski)
Sunrise: A Song of Two Humans (Murnau)

CARLOS F. HEREDERO

Spain, director, Caimán Cuadernos de Cine

Vertigo (Hitchcock)
Le Règle du jeu (Renoir)
Tokyo Story (Ozu)
Histoire(s) du cinéma (Godard)
In the Mood for Love (Wong)
The Searchers (Ford)
Shoah (Lanzmann)
The Green Ray (Rohmer)
Gertrud (Dreyer)
The Magnificent Ambersons (Welles)

J. HOBERMAN

US, critic

Au hasard Balthazar (Bresson)
Flaming Creatures (Smith)
The Girl from Chicago (Leonard)
Man with a Movie Camera (Dziga Vertov)
Pather Panchali (S. Ray)
Rose Hobart (Cornell)
La Règle du jeu (Renoir)
Shoah (Lanzmann)
Two or Three Things I Know About Her (Godard)
Vertigo (Hitchcock)

ALEXANDER HORWATH

Austria, director, Austrian Film Museum

Man with a Movie Camera (Dziga Vertov)
Fox News Outtakes 4-399/400
NYC Street Scenes and Noises (Anonymous, 1929)
Late Spring (Ozu)
Singin' in the Rain (Donen & Kelly)
Schwechater (Kubelka)
The Cloud-Capped Star (Ghatak)
I Am Twenty (Khutsiyev)
Line Describing a Cone (McCall)
Reisender Krieger (Schocher)
My Hand Outstretched to the Winged Distance and Sightless Measure (Beavers)
While it should be pretty obvious that these are the ten greatest films of all time, I still wonder if everyone will agree. The order is chronological.

GARY INDIANA

US, novelist

The Passion of Joan of Arc (Dreyer)
Metropolis (Lang)
Au hasard Balthazar (Bresson)
Los olvidados (Buñuel)
Sátántangó (Tarr)
Pierrot le fou (Godard)
In a Year with 13 Moons (Fassbinder)
Alexander Nevsky (Eisenstein)
Army of Shadows (Melville)
The Death of Maria Malibran (Schroeter)

NICK JAMES

UK, editor, 'Sight & Sound'

Andrei Rublev (Tarkovsky)
A Brighter Summer Day (Yang)
I Know Where I'm Going! (Powell & Pressburger)
In the Mood for Love (Wong)
Out of the Past (Tourneur)
Singin' in the Rain (Donen & Kelly)
The Passion of Joan of Arc (Dreyer)
Taxi Driver (Scorsese)
Uzak (Ceylan)
Vertigo (Hitchcock)
As usual, it's about what you leave out but also – crucially for me this time – it was important that my list did not make me feel stifled. I dumped from my 2002 list three fabulous films that I love slightly less than I did, perhaps because I've seen them too often: *Barry Lyndon*, *The Conformist* and *Hotel Terminus*. I did an auterist swap – Powell and Pressburger's *I Know Where I'm Going!* for *Black Narcissus* (pure favouritism) – and I replaced L'herbier's *L'Argent* with *The Passion of Joan of Arc* simply because Falconetti got under my skin completely when I saw Dreyer's film again recently.

'Close-Up' combined documentary and drama, destroying the boundary of formality of cinema in the most creative way

Kim Ji-seok

KENT JONES

US, critic

The Musketeers of Pig Alley (Griffith)
The Magnificent Ambersons (Welles)
Notorious (Hitchcock)
Pickpocket (Bresson)
Rio Bravo (Hawks)
Wavelength (Snow)
Raging Bull (Scorsese)
Fanny and Alexander – complete version (Bergman)
Shoah (Lanzmann)
The Puppetmaster (Hou)
In my case, the most painful omissions are: *Sunrise*, *The Shop Around the Corner*, *Paisà*, *Journey to Italy*, *The River* (Renoir), *The Searchers*, *Nicht versöhnt*, 2001, *Belle de jour*, *Crimes and Misdemeanors* and *Histoire(s) du cinéma*. Consider the above 'official' list as a momentary freeze-frame of one side of an endlessly spinning coin with these alternates on the flipside – along with the collected works of Brakhage, Cassavetes, Conner, Frampton, Frank, Ozu, Powell with and without Pressburger from *The Edge of the World* through *The Small Back Room*, Val Lewton from *Cat People* through *Bedlam*, the best of the Freed Unit from 1944 to 1955 (ie the best Minnelli and Donen/Kelly titles), the best of pre-code Warner Bros, about four or five other Hawks films and ten or 11 other Hitchcocks. That's still leaving out a lot. So why choose the 'official' chronologically ordered ten? It's certainly not because of any certitude in the matter of ranking. Maybe it's because they seem to me to contain so much.

NASREEN MUNNI KABIR

India, scholar and documentarist

Andaaz (Khan)
Awaara (Kapoor)
Devdas (Roy)
The Music Room (S. Ray)
The Cloud-Capped Star (Ghatak)
Pickpocket (Bresson)
Pyaasa (Dutt)
Singin' in the Rain (Donen & Kelly)
Sunset Blvd. (Wilder)
The Third Man (Reed)
All these films are from the period 1949-60, which I find particularly brilliant all over the world. Most audiences in the West aren't aware that it was also a golden period in Indian cinema. The Indian films in this selection don't feature on many lists of great movies – but they might if better known.





10 **8½** FEDERICO FELLINI

by Mar Diestro-Dópido

The title famously refers to the total number of films that Federico Fellini had made up to that point in his career, so it's no surprise that *8½* is his most personal work, in essence a film about the process of filmmaking. The film has been a fixture in *S&S* top tens, but what's significant is that it regularly takes an even higher position in the directors' ten best – for in the history of cinema, *8½* is arguably the film that most accurately captures the agonies of creativity and the circus that surrounds filmmaking.

After the huge success of his previous feature *La dolce vita*, Fellini turned his focus from portraying the circus that is life itself – a theme that's always present in his work, be it in the more literal sense of *La strada*, or the celebrity-related shenanigans in *La dolce vita* – and chose to look at the workings of his own mind, represented in the character of Guido (masterfully played by Fellini's alter ego Marcello Mastroianni), a famous director who faces a creative crisis before beginning his next film. As Guido/Fellini's mental journey unfolds, the process of self-analysis/discovery is what constitutes the film itself.

In equal parts narcissistic, self-deprecating, bitter, nostalgic, warm, critical and funny, *8½* is also a brilliant portrayal of Fellini's unique filmmaking. Stunningly filmed, beautifully grotesque and symbolic, in *8½* dreams, nightmares, reality and memories coexist within the same time-frame; the viewer sees Guido's world not as it is, but more 'realistically' as he experiences it, inserting the film in a lineage that stretches from the Surrealists to David Lynch. But perhaps most poignantly, Fellini's film speaks above all about a faith in finding a kind of purity (in love, film, life) that can only be conjured in the mind of the creator – a notion that almost 50 years after it was made resonates even more as our individual perspectives become increasingly isolated, trapped in the progressively complex maze of our mediated world.

9 **THE PASSION OF JOAN OF ARC** CARL THEODOR DREYER

by Jane Giles

As a teenager in the 1980s my introduction to *The Passion of Joan of Arc* came via Godard's *Vivre sa vie* (1962), in which the heroine Nana (Anna Karina) sees Dreyer's film in a cinema, a man's hand snaking around her shoulders. Nana weeps as she watches a tearful Joan preparing for death, and Godard's audience is equally moved.

To benchmark *Joan* in 1962 was a brilliant move. It was and remains an unassailable giant of early cinema, a transcendental film comprising tears, fire and madness that relies on extreme close-ups of the human face.

Renée Falconetti was 35 when she played the role of Joan (a teenager when condemned to death in 1431). Dreyer brutally extracted a desperate, brilliant performance from the actress, forcing her to kneel on stone to show the pain on her face. He insisted that they shot in silence.

Over the years, *Joan* has often been a difficult film to see. Dreyer's original version was thought to have been lost in a nitrate fire, and even after it was miraculously found in

perfect condition in a Norwegian psychiatric institution in 1981, it was often out of distribution (though it is finally due to be released on UK DVD and Blu-ray later this year).

Even during its lost years, however, *Joan* has remained embedded in the critical consciousness, thanks to the strength of its early reception, reinforced by the striking stills that appeared in film books, by its presence in Godard's film and recently by a series of live screenings accompanied by Richard Einhorn's choral work 'Voices of Light', or Nick Cave and Dirty Three, or Adrian Utley and Will Gregory, or Cat Power. To hear any one of these scores performed live with the film on the big screen is an unforgettable experience.

In this year's *S&S* poll, *Joan* has risen to no. 9. But in 2010 it was designated the most influential film of all time in the Toronto International Film Festival's 'Essential 100' list, where Jonathan Rosenbaum described it as "the pinnacle of silent cinema – and perhaps of the cinema itself".





DAVE KEHR

US, columnist, 'The New York Times', 'Film Comment'

Vertigo (Hitchcock)
The Searchers (Ford)
Le Mépris (Godard)
Journey to Italy (Rossellini)
The Big Trail (Walsh)
Play Time (Tati)
Make Way for Tomorrow (McCarey)
Sansho dayu (Mizoguchi)
Intolerance (Griffith)
Docks of New York (von Sternberg)
 All long-take, *mise en scène* movies, with the partial exception of *Intolerance*. Perhaps this is my knee-jerk reaction against the current mania for machine-gun editing.

MARK KERMODE

UK, critic

The Exorcist (Friedkin)
A Matter of Life and Death (Powell & Pressburger)
The Devils (Russell)
It's a Wonderful Life (Capra)
Don't Look Now (Roeg)
Pan's Labyrinth (del Toro)
Mary Poppins (Stevenson)
Brazil (Gilliam)
Eyes Without a Face (Franju)
The Seventh Seal (Bergman)

KIM DONG-HO

South Korea, honorary festival director, Busan International Film Festival

Ivan's Childhood (Tarkovsky)
Landscape in the Mist (Angelopoulos)
Modern Times (Chaplin)
La dolce vita (Fellini)
Pickpocket (Bresson)
Vertigo (Hitchcock)
Mandala (Im)
A City of Sadness (Hou)
Seven Samurai (Kurosawa)
Platform (Jia)
 Of the Far Eastern films, Im Kwon-taek's *Mandala* is the most profound filmic study on religion and salvation; the Hou is an epic on the history of ordeal told via a tragedy of a family; the Kurosawa, a masterpiece that escapes the limitations of a genre film; and Jia Zhangke's 2009 *Platform*, a cinematic achievement that looks into a society in a period of upheaval.

KIM JI-SEOK

South Korea, executive programmer, Busan International Film Festival

2001: A Space Odyssey (Kubrick)
A City of Sadness (Hou)
A Moment of Innocence (M. Makhmalbaf)
A Tale of the Wind (Ivens)
Citizen Kane (Welles)
Close-Up (Kiarostami)
Diary of a Country Priest (Bresson)
Nostalgia (Tarkovsky)
The Colour of Pomegranates (Parajanov)
Tokyo Story (Ozu)
 2001 is the film that describes the encounter between God and man in the most dramatic way. *Close-Up* impressively combined documentary and drama, destroying the boundary of formality of cinema in the most creative way. *Nostalgia* shows the fate and hope of an artist in a dreamlike style.

DIETER KOSSLICK

Germany, director, Berlin International Film Festival

The Great Dictator (Chaplin)
Some Like It Hot (Wilder)
Magnolia (P.T. Anderson)
The Life and Death of Colonel Blimp (Powell & Pressburger)
Ben-Hur (Wyler)
Germany Year Zero (Rossellini)
Taxi Driver (Scorsese)
One, Two, Three (Wilder)
Fear Eats the Soul (Fassbinder)
The Enigma of Kaspar Hauser (Herzog)

ESIN KUCUKTEPEPINAR

Turkey, critic

Andreï Rublev (Tarkovsky)
Barry London (Kubrick)
Black Narcissus (Powell & Pressburger)
La ciénaga (Martel)
Dekalog (Kieslowski)
Distant Voices, Still Lives (Davies)
Hope/Umut (Günay)
A One and a Two (Yang)
Sátántangó (Tarr)
Singin' in the Rain (Donen & Kelly)
 I was on my way to a top 100 instead of ten when I started to list films like *Goodbye Dragon Inn*, *Spirited Away*, *The Wind Will Carry Us*... Obviously struggling! Then I recalled my beloved mother saying: "Cinema offers bodily experience. Loosen up and lose yourself like in the playground." That was said to a six-year-old me whose basic aim was to enjoy a bottle of soda during the interval. So I tried to loosen up, but still with regrets I had to miss out *La Règle du jeu*, *Metropolis*, *Belle de jour*, *L'Atalante* and Turkish contemporaries such as *Times and Winds*, *Clouds of May*, *Innocence*, *Somersault in a Coffin* or cult classic *Time to Love*, and countless more. Still, making this list was a great ride, recalling all those emotions.

DANA LINSSEN

Netherlands, editor in chief 'De Filmkrant', film critic 'NRC Handelsblad'

Singin' in the Rain (Donen & Kelly)
Sans soleil (Marker)
Yellow Submarine (Dunning)
Jeanne Dielmann, 23
quai du Commerce 1080
Bruxelles (Akerman)
A Man Escaped (Bresson)
Chungking Express (Wong)
The House Is Black (Farrokhzad)
The Intruder (Denis)
Fight Club (Fincher)
RR (Benning)

I am not a list person. They drift with the clouds. The top three, however, have been unchanged for years. And for these three films I could even narrow it down to particular 'great' scenes: the famous singing and dancing in the rain; the opening sequence with the English voiceover, but with the original French Racine quote: "The distance between countries compensates somewhat for the excessive closeness of time" (although I love the Eliot one too); and the final pandemonium that spells/says/sings: "All You Need Is Love". These scenes made me love cinema – in all its magic, discomfort and capacity to see beyond the image. The other films blew my

mind at some point, probably for the same reasons. But I cannot exactly say why; that is why I keep returning to them. In general that is my only criterion in compiling lists and 'rating' films: which ones would I like to see again, here and now. It happens rather intuitively. But I have to bow my head in humility for not being able to include John Smith's *The Girl Chewing Gum*, Abbas Kiarostami's *The Wind Will Carry Us*, Tsai Ming-liang's *What Time Is It There?*, Abderrahmane Sissako's *Bamako* or Agnès Varda's *The Beaches of Agnès*. Oh well.

TIINA LOKK

Estonia, Black Knights Festival

Citizen Kane (Welles)
Battleship Potemkin (Eisenstein)
Andreï Rublev (Tarkovsky)
Zéro de conduite (Vigo)
Amarcord (Fellini)
Pulp Fiction (Tarantino)
A Taste of Cherry (Kiarostami)
A One and a Two (Yang)
Spring, Summer, Autumn, Winter... and Spring (Kim)
One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest (Forman)

VERENA LUEKEN

Germany, film editor,

'Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung'
The Leopard (Visconti)
L'avventura (Antonioni)
The General (Keaton)
Kagemusha (Kurosawa)
Night and Fog (Resnais)
The Red Shoes (Powell & Pressburger)
The Searchers (Ford)
Some Like It Hot (Wilder)
2001: A Space Odyssey (Kubrick)
Tropical Melady (Weerasethakul)
 It was a pleasurable challenge, and it took many hours to decide what to do. Thirty movies would be easier, 100 a piece of cake. But ten? Finally, I decided to leave out the films that we've known for decades belong to this list: *Citizen Kane*, *Tokyo Story*, *Battleship Potemkin*, *The Godfather*, *Sunrise* et al. I chose my films as a mixture of personal favourites, new proposals and those I think make sense in my view on film history as presented in a personal 'greatest' list.

TODD MCCARTHY

US, critic, 'The Hollywood Reporter'

In chronological order:
Trouble in Paradise (Lubitsch)
Le Crime de Monsieur Lange (Renoir)
Ruggles of Red Gap (McCarey)
To Have and Have Not (Hawks)
Shoot the Pianist (Truffaut)
Lawrence of Arabia (Lean)
Le Mépris (Godard)
The Leopard (Visconti)
Chimes at Midnight (Welles)
Barry Lyndon (Kubrick)

FLORENCE MAILLARD

France, critic, 'Cahiers du cinéma'

Deep End (Skolimowski)
La dolce vita (Fellini)
Full Moon in Paris (Rohmer)
North by Northwest (Hitchcock)
Pickpocket (Bresson)
Profondo rosso (Argento)
Tabu (Murnau & Flaherty)

All the films on my list are from the period 1949-60. Audiences in the West aren't aware that it was also a golden period in Indian cinema

Nasreen Munni Kabir

Young Mr. Lincoln (Ford)

Zéro de conduite (Vigo)

Zodiac (Fincher)

Maybe because I am not the list-making type, or maybe because greatness is a criterion with a thousand meanings, making this list was a real heartbreak. Films that are like the oldest friends, intimate references, different corners of the heart and mind, and the secret connections between them... Whether I decided to be rational or sentimental, there were many possible alternatives. But even if I only tend to see what's missing in the end, I can say I once fell (and still am) in love with each one of these 'ten great films'.

DEREK MALCOLM

UK, critic, 'London Evening Standard'

Tokyo Story (Ozu)
Ugetsu monogatari (Mizoguchi)
Touch of Evil (Welles)
L'Atalante (Vigo)
Tristana (Buñuel)
Smiles of a Summer Night (Bergman)
Umberto D (De Sica)
Apocalypse Now (Coppola)
The Third Man (Reed)
The Music Room (S. Ray)
 Tomorrow it could be ten other films. How to choose between *Bicycle Thieves* and *Umberto D*, *Apocalypse Now* and *Come and See*? It comes down to favourites rather than best, and an attempt to avoid fashion and prejudice. I doubt if I've succeeded.

MIGUEL MARÍAS

Spain, critic and teacher

The Wings of Eagles (Ford)
The River (Renoir)
Tabu (Murnau & Flaherty)
Akassen chitai/Street of Shame (Mizoguchi)
Vertigo (Hitchcock)
The Tiger of Eschnapur (Lang)
An Affair to Remember (McCarey)
Isn't Life Wonderful (Griffith)
The Mortal Storm (Borzhage)
The Student Prince in Old Heidelberg (Lubitsch)
 These are neither the ten films I think are the greatest ever made nor even my ten favourite ones. I would need at least 100 for that. They are merely ten of my very favourite movies, which I admire as much as any other but which, even choosing only one film per director, do not fully represent what I find most important or what moves me most in the cinema. If they are all very old (the most recent are

already 54 years old), it is because I have chosen only foolproof movies, which I have watched many times over the course of at least 50 years, excluding those that I have seen only a couple of times or only quite recently. That leaves out recent discoveries or possibly passing fancies. It makes me angry with myself to leave out Godard, Dreyer, Rossellini, Chaplin, Preminger, Ophüls, Nicholas Ray, Hawks, Naruse, Ozu, Shimizu, Guitry and many others, but alas, ten is ten.

ADRIAN MARTIN

Australia, critic

Anna (Griffi & Sarchielli)
Behindert (Dwoskin)
The Departure/Le Départ (Skolimowski)
L'Enfant secret (Garrel)
Eyes Wide Shut (Kubrick)
The Killing of a Chinese Bookie (Cassavetes)
Night and Day/Nuit et jour (Akerman)
Floating Clouds (Naruse)
By the Bluest of Seas (Barnet & Mardanian)
Wanda (Loden)

Most often, polls like this one get stuck in the past: the irrefutably canonised greats of cinema, as well as the participants' own, long-ago youthful discoveries of them. This time I have decided to favour masterpieces that, for the most part, I came upon during the last decade, and that sit outside the canon's comfort zone.

DANIELA MICHEL

Mexico, director, Morelia

International Film Festival
Ei (Buñuel)
Vertigo (Hitchcock)
L'Atalante (Vigo)
Tokyo Story (Ozu)
Trouble in Paradise (Lubitsch)
Andreï Rublev (Tarkovsky)
The Passion of Joan of Arc (Dreyer)
Sátántangó (Tarr)
Aventurera (Gout)
The Last Command (von Sternberg)

WESLEY MORRIS

US, critic, 'The Boston Globe'

Au hasard Balthazar (Bresson)
Battleship Potemkin (Eisenstein)
Do the Right Thing (Lee)
Metropolis (Lang)
Naked (Leigh)
Taxi Driver (Scorsese)
There Will Be Blood (P.T. Anderson)
Sunrise: A Song of Two Humans (Murnau)
Vertigo (Hitchcock)
A One and a Two (Yang)

Some history is time reinforcing itself for posterity's benefit. And the immediate trouble with a list of ten movies across a century is that you begin to see how posterity springs a leak. I'm not interested in reinforcement, which is the eternal argument against including *Citizen Kane* or *Seven Samurai* or *Tokyo Story* on this list. It's either: "Someone else will do it," or "This is greatness as a received wisdom." That's not how I feel. They are great, but their greatness – and the greatness of about three dozen other movies



8

MAN WITH A MOVIE CAMERA

DZIGA VERTOV

by Nick Bradshaw

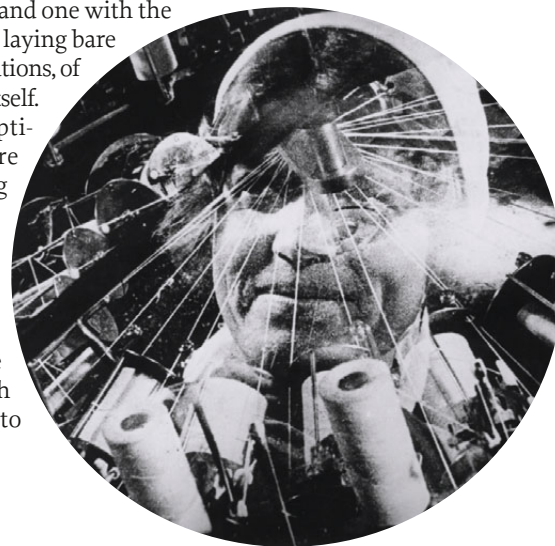
Is Dziga Vertov's cine-city symphony a film whose time has finally come? Ranked only no. 27 in our last critics' poll, it now displaces Eisenstein's erstwhile perennial *Battleship Potemkin* as the Constructivist Soviet silent of choice. Like Eisenstein's warhorse, it's an agit-experiment that sees montage as the means to a revolutionary consciousness; but rather than proceeding through fable and illusion, it's explicitly engaged both with recording the modern urban everyday (which makes it the top documentary in our poll) and with its representation back to its participant-subjects (thus the top meta-movie).

A compound of views of Moscow, Odessa and Kiev, *Man with a Movie Camera* is structured less along the geographic lines of most city symphonies of its era than along the basics of how a complex society organises itself across a day. Yet despite the film's 'pure cinema' avowal, it channels its collectivist vision through the dramatic mainstay of an identifiable protagonist, the titular filmmaker/mediator.

Of course, there's another lineage at play. As the title makes plain, *MWAMC* concerns the (post-)industrial

interplay of humans and machines. Like Fritz Lang's *Mabuse* films, it's engaged with the novel implications of the moving image; but unlike almost anything from the West, it posits cinema as an extension of other forms of mechanical production – and one with the transformational promise of laying bare the integration of human relations, of enabling mass society to see itself.

Dziga Vertov's techno-optimism may now seem more utopian than anything outside Silicon Valley; certainly capitalist movies, from *2001* to *The Matrix*, have preferred dystopian visions of our relationship with our tools. But in a time when we're all becoming people with phone cameras, its manifesto remains a salutary challenge.



7

THE SEARCHERS

JOHN FORD

by Kieron Corless

Few would begrudge the return of John Ford's intimate revenge epic to the critics' top ten. Do its fluctuations in popularity – no appearance in either critics' or directors' top tens in 2002, but fifth in the 1992 critics' poll – reflect the shifts in popularity of the western (this is by some

distance the highest showing in the poll of any film in that genre)? It could be a case of this being a western for people who don't much care for them, but I suspect it's more to do with John Ford's stock having risen higher than ever this past decade (recall the universal rapture at the release of the outstanding *Ford at Fox* DVD box-sets a few years ago) and the citing of his influence in the unlikelyst of places in recent cinema: the slums of Lisbon, for example, in the cinema of Pedro Costa. Ford was branded a reactionary in the 1960s, but since then, under more nuanced examination by the likes of Tag Gallagher, he has been revealed as a far more politically complex and ambivalent figure.

At the heart of *The Searchers* is a complicated, unvarnished character portrait, one of the greatest ever: John Wayne as Ethan Edwards – brutal, driven, curdled, racist. There are familiar generic elements here, but it's the less than familiar, I'd argue, that elevates the film in critical estimation: moments of savage poetry and mystery. Take the haunting (studio) shot of two men on horses in the snow-bound trees, like a gorgeous Richard Prince *avant la lettre*.

Doors are a common-or-garden metaphor in cinema, but here the opening of the door at the beginning – and that slow track through it – ushers us into such strange vistas; Monument Valley here is virtually a sci-fi landscape. And never was a door more eloquently, heartbreakingly and definitively closed than it is in the final shot. What gives this the edge over so many other brilliant westerns is its sense of a plenitude of meanings – of being utterly inexhaustible. Just like the spirit of Ethan Edwards, still out there, still searching for a place of rest and peace, a home.

— doesn't thrill me the way Spike Lee's or, in that one film, Mike Leigh's does.

I'm also interested in the recent past and the way great directors rose to the occasions of their times. Or were directors or Apichatpong Weerasethakul, but I could have. How reassuring it would be to see this magnificent list and not feel that the movies — cinema! — stopped after the second *Godfather*. No one seriously believes that. Do they?

KATE MUIR

UK, chief film critic, 'The Times'

The Godfather (Coppola)

The Ascent (Shepitko)

Psycho (Hitchcock)

Shoah (Lanzmann)

Cleo from 5 to 7 (Varda)

Solaris (Tarkovsky)

We Need to Talk About

Kevin (Ramsay)

Mulholland Dr. (Lynch)

I Know Where I'm Going!

(Powell & Pressburger)

Do the Right Thing (Lee)

What would an all-female list look like, starting with Alice Guy-Blaché and marching on to Leni Riefenstahl, Claire Denis, Jane Campion, Kelly Reichardt, Kathryn Bigelow and Andrea Arnold? Are women directors just starting to stand the test of time?

MARCO MÜLLER

Italy/Switzerland,

director, Rome Film Festival

Au hasard Balthazar (Bresson)

Bringing up Baby (Hawks)

Europa 51 (Rossellini)

I Was Born, But... (Ozu)

Ordet (Dreyer)

The River (Renoir)

The Searchers (Ford)

Sunrise: A Song of Two

Humans (Murnau)

By the Bluest of Seas

(Barnet & Mardarain)

Vertigo (Hitchcock)

Barnet's film is an ethology of the euphoric human body: the most unclassifiable Soviet film ever.

LAURA MULVEY

UK, professor of film and media studies,

Birkbeck, University of London

In chronological order:

Man with a Movie Camera

(Dziga Vertov)

Love Me Tonight (Mamoulian)

La signora di tutti (Max Ophüls)

Journey to Italy (Rossellini)

Imitation of Life (Sirk)

Pierrot le fou (Godard)

Wavelength (Snow)

Xala (Sembene)

Jeanne Dielmann, 23

quai du Commerce 1080

Bruxelles (Akerman)

Through the Olive

Trees (Kiarostami)

OKAJIMA HISASHI

Japan, chief curator, National Film Center

In chronological order:

Sylvester (Pick)

Borderline (MacPherson)

Malombra (Soldati)

Susana (Buñuel)

The Music Room (S. Ray)

Andrei Rublev (Tarkovsky)

Yukcheui kil/The Body's Way (Jo)

A Touch of Zen (Hu)

Yol (Güney & Gören)

The Boys from Fengkuei (Hou)

There is a group of films that feel like my family. I didn't choose any of them. Hence, no works by 'classical' Japanese film masters at all. I also didn't choose any films that feel like my relatives. So, no films by such pantheon cineastes as Keaton, Ford, Welles or Renoir. Why not? It's simply because I feel great hesitation to praise any members of my own family or relatives in public. The films of my list are all felt like my year-long friends from afar. They once gave me a hard slap on the cheek. I can't forget that pain and pleasure.

OKUBO KEN

Japan, critic

The General (Keaton)

Les Enfants du paradis (Carné)

The Song Lantern (Naruse)

Touch of Evil (Welles)

Antonio das Mortes (Rocha)

Eros Plus Massacre (Yoshida)

Magino Village: A Tale (Ogawa)

Dogra Magura (Matsumoto)

Mysterious Object at

Noon (Weerasethakul)

Tiexi Qu/West of the

Tracks (Wang B)

From the silent era to the 21st century, I have chosen some monsters I love. Ogawa's last film and the Weerasethakul are brilliant examples of the freedom of multi-narratives.

CAMILLE PAGLIA

US, professor of humanities and media studies, University of the Arts, Philadelphia

Ben-Hur (Wyler)

The Godfather (Coppola)

The Godfather Part II (Coppola)

Gone with the Wind (Fleming)

La dolce vita (Fellini)

Lawrence of Arabia (Lean)

North by Northwest (Hitchcock)

Orphée (Cocteau)

Persona (Bergman)

Vertigo (Hitchcock)

My favourite films combine spectacular photography with strength and depth of character. Their intense emotional resonance is often amplified by superb orchestral scores, more expressive than mere words. A great film creates a world of its own. It can be seen again and again without ever losing its freshness and surprise.

What would an all-female list look like, starting with Alice Guy-Blaché and marching on to Claire Denis, Jane Campion and Andrea Arnold?

Kate Muir

ALAN PAULS

Argentina, writer

Citizen Kane (Welles)

Hitler: A Film from

Germany (Syberberg)

L'eclisse (Antonioni)

La Maman et la Putain (Eustache)

Full Moon in Paris (Rohmer)

Love Streams (Cassavetes)

The Sacrifice (Tarkovsky)

Prénom Carmen (Godard)

Rocco and His Brothers (Visconti)

Stromboli (Rossellini)

These are, in alphabetical order, ten films that make me ask — every time I see them, and I've seen them a lot of times — the same two questions: a) what the hell is that? b) what kind of world would the world be without cinema?

IAN PENMAN

UK, critic and archivist,

Museum of Loneliness

Pat Garrett & Billy the

Kid (Peckinpah)

Le Cercle rouge (Melville)

In a Year with 13 Moons

(Fassbinder)

The Producers (Brooks)

A New Leaf (May)

It's a Gift (McLeod)

Sicilia! (Straub-Huillet)

Trans-Europ-Express

(Robbe-Grillet)

The Funeral (Ferrara)

Trash (Morrissey)

"The feeling of strangeness that overcomes the actor before the camera... is basically of the same kind as the estrangement felt before one's own image in the mirror." — Walter Benjamin.

List-making of this sort is an impossible and fearful task. The only *S&S* top tens I ever noticed in previous decades were the little self-portraits in list form, rather than the ones striving towards some grand canonical presentation — the half-forgotten polaroid in a drawer, rather than the commandment from on high. Small movements or gestures in films — moments of unlikely energy, reflection, emptying or light — can affect you way out of proportion to their supposed 'importance'. Or — as Manny Farber might have it — the vigour and surprise of "termites art" over the smugness and excess of "white elephant art".

OLIVIER PÈRE

France/Switzerland, artistic director,

Locarno International Film Festival

In chronological order:

Sunrise: A Song of Two

Humans (Murnau)

The Testament of Dr

Mabuse (Lang)

Partie de campagne (Renoir)

La Règle du jeu (Renoir)

To Be or Not to Be (Lubitsch)

Ugetsu monogatari (Mizoguchi)

The Searchers (Ford)

Vertigo (Hitchcock)

Le Mépris (Godard)

Ludwig (Visconti)

Dying in a car accident just after the advent of sound and the talkies, Murnau was undoubtedly the first major genius of cinema, and the last of the great German Romantics. His vast knowledge of painting, theatre, architecture

and philosophy enabled him to realise a perfect work of art that is complete at every level, both in terms of formal execution and thematics, yet it is a purely cinematic creation, in no way dependent on the pre-existing arts.

In *The Testament of Dr Mabuse*, we are confronted with an impressive mastery of the dramatic use of sound elements and an incredible feeling for action and suspense.

Only Renoir has managed to express on film the most elevated notion of naturalism, examining this world from a perspective that is dark, cruel but objective, before going on to achieve the serenity of the work of his old age. With him, one has no qualms about using superlatives: *La Règle du jeu* is quite simply the greatest French film by the greatest of French directors.

The greatest of Japanese filmmakers, Mizoguchi in his films expresses perfectly the universality of an art that is however rooted in Japanese culture and history. *Ugetsu monogatari* is the apogee of film classicism.

John Ford, beyond a doubt the greatest of American directors (and one of the greatest in the world), produced a body of work of incredible scope and richness.

One of the finest films ever made about both coupledom and the cinema, *Le Mépris* is also — with good reason — Godard's most mythical film, in which he allows himself a degree of lyricism that was only to resurface again in his much later work.

In 1973 Visconti concluded his 'German trilogy' with *Ludwig*. The titanic shoot delivered a monster of a film, without a doubt the director's most brilliant work, but which proved to be, once again, a financial disaster. The film suffered drastic editing for international distribution, and it was only after Visconti's death that we were able to see this spectacular film in its full four-hour version.

GILBERTO PÉREZ

US/Cuba, writer and academic, Sarah Lawrence College

Sherlock Jr. (Keaton)

Earth (Dovzhenko)

Zéro de conduite (Vigo)

La Règle du jeu (Renoir)

Wagon Master (Ford)

Sansho dayu (Mizoguchi)

Viridiana (Buñuel)

L'eclisse (Antonioni)

Ceddo (Sembene)

Through the Olive

Trees (Kiarostami)

The order is chronological. I regret I have no room in the arbitrary top ten for Chaplin or Murnau, Cagney or Stanwyck, Bruce Baillie or Ernie Gehr, *It Happened One Night* or *Mr. Thank You*, *Shadow of a Doubt* or *The Reckless Moment*, *Day of Wrath* or *Andrei Rublev*, *Nicht versöhnt* or *Eloge de l'amour*.

JOHN POWERS

US, film critic, 'Vogue'

L'Atalante (Vigo)

Blue Velvet (Lynch)

Flowers of Shanghai (Hou)

Small gestures in films — moments of unlikely energy, reflection, emptying or light — can affect you way out of proportion to their 'importance'

Ian Penman

The Godfather Part II (Coppola)

His Girl Friday (Hawks)

Late Spring (Ozu)

Masculin féminin (Godard)

My Friend Ivan Lapshin (German)

Notorious (Hitchcock)

Sunrise: A Song of Two

Humans (Murnau)

QUINTÍN

Argentina, critic

Histoire(s) du cinéma (Godard)

I Was Born, But... (Ozu)

La Grande Illusion (Renoir)

The Man Who Shot

Liberty Valance (Ford)

Journey to Italy (Rossellini)

Sicilia! (Straub-Huillet)

Shoah (Lanzmann)

Death Proof (Tarantino)

The Host (Bong)

La libertad (Alonso)

NICOLAS RAPOLD

US, senior editor, 'Film Comment'

In a Lonely Place (N. Ray)

Vertigo (Hitchcock)

Pickpocket (Bresson)

The Miracle of Morgan's

Creek (Sturges)

Play Time (Tati)

The 400 Blows (Truffaut)

Breathless (Godard)

Eraserhead (Lynch)

Videodrome (Cronenberg)

Duck Soup (McCarey)

TONY RAYNS

UK, critic

Birth of the Nation/Die Geburt

der Nation (Wyborney)

Un chien andalou (Buñuel)

Once upon a Time in

the West (Leone)

The Scarlet Empress

(von Sternberg)

Scenes from City Life/

Dushi Fengguang (Yuan)

Spring in a Small Town (Fei)

Straits of Love and Hate/

Aien Kyo (Mizoguchi)

Taipei Story (Yang)

Textism (Hirabayashi)

Touch of Evil (Welles)

Not much change from 2002, so I'm obviously set in my ways. What the list reveals is an admiration for films which push an idea about cinema to its apparent limit, and do so with elegance and wit. The only recent film on the list, Hirabayashi's brilliant *Textism* (2003), stands for a vein of iconoclastic avant-gardism which stretches from Robert Florey to Kenneth Anger and Hollis Frampton.

6 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY

STANLEY KUBRICK

by Kim Newman

2001: *A Space Odyssey* made its first entry in this poll, at number ten, in 1992, 24 years after its 1968 release. It climbed to number six in 2002, and has held that position in 2012. (I'm partially responsible for this performance: I compiled my 2012 list without looking up my 2002 list. Six films recurred, but this time I plumped for 2001 instead of *The Shining*. After the theatrical reissue of the latter, it might edge ahead again. In 2022, I might elevate *Barry Lyndon* over both, or relegate Stanley Kubrick from the pantheon entirely.)

Not only do we now find ourselves 44 years on from a film that seemed once to epitomise the future – it advanced the default date of what we thought of as 'the future' from George Orwell's 1984 – but we're a full decade past the years (and despite the film's title, it is 'years' – the plot, even excluding the 'Dawn of Man' prologue, covers more than 12 months) in which Kubrick and Arthur C. Clarke decided that humanity would come face to face with its alien origins.

So many future visions, from *Metropolis* to *Blade Runner* to *The Matrix*, get shunted into a parallel time – a possible timeline we didn't take. But, despite the date-stamp, 2001 still seems coolly plausible and resonant.

The film's belief in mankind's future (and past) in space has been sidelined, which gives it a nostalgic edge, but it remains a fascinating, stately film, which finds space slow and empty and yet wondrous, and simmers with emotional nuance even when the onscreen characters are a computer and astronauts obligated to show no reaction. As *Prometheus* proved with its Wikipedia version of 2001's content, Kubrick's film remains the touchstone for ambitious film science fiction. And at the same time its wonders have only been enhanced by the recent trend for screening the film with a full symphony orchestra on hand to perform the classical soundtrack selections by Johann Strauss, Richard Strauss, Ligeti and Khachaturian.



5 SUNRISE

F.W. MURNAU

by Isabel Stevens

When F.W. Murnau left Germany for America in 1926, did cinema foresee what was coming? Did it sense that change was around the corner – that now was the time to fill up on fantasy, delirium and spectacle before talking actors wrenched the artform closer to reality? *Sunrise: A Song of Two Humans* – the pinnacle of Murnau's silent career – certainly suggests this was the case.

Many things make this film more than just a morality tale about temptation and lust, a fable about a young husband so crazy with desire for a city girl that he contemplates drowning his wife, an elemental but sweet story of a husband and wife rediscovering their love for each other. *Sunrise* was an example – perhaps never again repeated on the same scale – of unfettered imagination and the clout of the studio system working together rather than at cross purposes. Murnau had a new Fox studio to transform into moonlit marshes and dazzling gargantuan cityscapes. In his quest for optical experimentation he used every tool available (superimposition, in-camera trickery), inventing those that didn't already exist (such as his flying camera, floating from cranes above).

Testament to Murnau's remarkable achievement was the fact that post-*Sunrise* cinema could never again be dismissed as lightweight amusement in quite the same way. Combining Expressionism's shadows and shards of light with the lyricism of Dutch genre painting, Murnau decreed that cinema could do what art does, and more...

So why, one wonders, did *Sunrise* only first appear in the top ten in 2002? And why has it now climbed from seventh position to fifth? Silent cinema's resurgence in popularity – combined with recent restorations – accounts for some of that. But a vote for *Sunrise* is of course a vote for a lost world. As cinema teeters on the edge of technological change again – as projectors are ripped out of cinemas and film cameras and canisters gather dust in archives – *Sunrise* reminds us that there's no turning back.

**B. RUBY RICH**

US, professor, University of California, Santa Cruz

Born in Flames (*Borden*)
Daisies (*Chytilová*)
Darwin's Nightmare (*Sauper*)
In the Mood for Love (*Wong*)
Looking for Langston (*Julien*)
Man with a Movie Camera (*Dziga Vertov*)
Memories of Underdevelopment (*Gutiérrez Alea*)
Nostalgia for the Light (*Guzmán*)
Orlando (*Potter*)
Sweet Sweetback's Baadasssss Song (*Van Peebles*)

The importance of films is fixed in the moment in our lives at which we see them—in a classroom, in a drive-in, in a rep house, in a festival or on a plane or computer screen or, gasp, iPhone. Our age at that moment is crucial: I was imprinted with Vertov and *Daisies* at a moment when cinematic language was changing radically, and these films from the former Eastern Bloc were key to fusing artistic bravura with political reach.

As I came of age as a film addict, a feminist and lesbian, attuned to the aesthetics of my age, Potter and Julien and Borden were equally crucial in demonstrating how thrillingly cinema could write the templates of identity. Of sexuality, too, though here Sally Potter and Wong Kar-Wai are equally influential on that front. Ah, Tilda Swinton in a sleigh, Maggie Cheung in a café, and Honey on the radio dial.

For my generation, Latin America was the great battleground and the land of promise. Gutiérrez Alea's long-misunderstood masterpiece defined a new Latin American cinema, just as Guzmán's more recent essay film did, all over again. And *Sweet Sweetback*? Here there's a manifesto to be written. Raw, scabrous and packed with too many ideas and energy for one film, it's the cornerstone of the modern American independent-film movement, linking together low-budget production, non-union crews, sexploitation, and the French New Wave into one combustible whole.

PIERRE RISSIENT

France, critic, filmmaker and programmer

In chronological order:
L'Assommoir (*Capellani*)
The Mothering Heart (*Griffith*)
Faust (*Murnau*)
From Saturday to Sunday (*Machaty*)
Angel (*Lubitsch*)
Make Way for Tomorrow (*McCarey*)
Pursued (*Walsh*)
Not Wanted (*Lupino*)
Whirlpool (*Preminger*)
The Tiger of Eschnapur (*Lang*)
 PS: from 2012—*Like Someone in Love* by Abbas Kiarostami?

KONG RITHDEE

Thailand, film critic, 'Bangkok Post'

Breathless (*Godard*)
L'avventura (*Antonioni*)
La Règle du jeu (*Renoir*)
Mirror (*Tarkovsky*)

Dying in a car accident just after the advent of sound and the talkies, Murnau was undoubtedly the first major genius of cinema

Olivier Père

Mulholland Dr. (*Lynch*)
That Obscure Object of Desire (*Buñuel*)
Tokyo Story (*Ozu*)
Tropical Malady (*Weerasethakul*)
Vertigo (*Hitchcock*)
A One and a Two (*Yang*)
 The attempt is to heed the call of history as well as the urgency of the now, but in all I guess I merely try to recall the moment the hammer hit me—it's more than ten times—and to remember the films that tried to test the invisible borders of cinema.

JONATHAN ROMNEY

UK, film critic, 'The Independent on Sunday'

Hellzapoppin' (*Potter*)
Lola (*Demy*)
Out 1 (*Rivette*)
Pierrot le fou (*Godard*)
Sátántangó (*Tarr*)
The Shining (*Kubrick*)
Street of Crocodiles (*Quay & Quay*)
Syndromes and a Century (*Weerasethakul*)
The Three Crowns of the Sailor (*Ruiz*)
Touch of Evil (*Welles*)
 It's hard making the list again, ten years after the last time—you feel you want to be faithful to your earlier choices, but what to lose if other films have inspired you since? My only criterion for this list is that it's entirely to do with my own filmgoing history—these are films that have all revealed something new to me at important moments. There are three new additions. *Pierrot le fou* replaces *Le Mépris*, as it's simply more fun—but I also realised that it was the first Godard I ever saw. Of the two films I've discovered in the last decade, *Out 1* was for years my Holy Grail—I thought I'd never see it, and when I did I wasn't disappointed. It's still a magnificent blueprint for generating fictions out of the everyday—and it impresses me all the more in that, even though huge chunks are barely watchable (the theatre sections), it's nevertheless extraordinary overall.

I'm taking a risk on Apichatpong Weerasethakul, as I'm not sure what *Syndromes* will mean in the long term, but I was bowled over when I saw it—I'm always hoping to sight those rare screen phenomena that French critics like to call UFOs, and this film truly is (at the risk of repeating the Joe cliché) the

authentic 'mysterious object'. As for an old favourite, *Hellzapoppin'*, it's still my desert-island film—a crammed encyclopedia of meta-farce that continues to crack me up after all these years.

JONATHAN ROSENBAUM

US, critic

In chronological order:
Greed (*von Stroheim*)
Spione/Spies (*Lang*)
Ivan (*Dovzhenko*)
I Was Born, But... (*Ozu*)
Rear Window (*Hitchcock*)
Cuadecuc vampir (*Portabella*)
Sátántangó (*Tarr*)
Histoire(s) du cinéma (*Godard*)
The Wind Will Carry Us (*Kiarostami*)
The World (*Jia*)
 I didn't allow myself to include any titles from my previous S&S lists.

PAMELA BIENZOBAS SAFFIE

Chile, critic, 'Revista de Cine Mabuse'

Andrei Rublev (*Tarkovsky*)
Blue Velvet (*Lynch*)
Days of Heaven (*Malick*)
Edvard Munch (*Watkins*)
Paris, Texas (*Wenders*)
The Passion of Joan of Arc (*Dreyer*)
Pickpocket (*Bresson*)
The Passenger (*Antonioni*)
Ugetsu monogatari (*Mizoguchi*)
The Gospel According to St Matthew (*Pasolini*)
 One way I found to try to get around the difficulty (and the feeling of arrogance) of establishing a list of the 'greatest films of all time' was to arbitrarily rule out all the filmmakers who in the 2002 poll arrived within the top 10 films or directors, of the critics or the directors. This means excluding all films by Bergman, Coppola, De Sica, Dönen, Eisenstein, Fellini, Ford, Godard, Hitchcock, Kelly, Kubrick, Kurosawa, Lean, Murnau, Ozu, Renoir, Scorsese, Welles or Wilder. I stuck to a term suggested in the invitation to vote—"impact"—and assumed the utter subjectivity of the exercise.

SATO TADAO

Japan, critic, historian and president, Japan Institute of the Moving Image

The Bogey-Man (*Aravindan*)
Mandala (*Im*)
Where Is My Friend's House? (*Kiarostami*)
Banana Paradise (*Wang T.*)
Ferocious Saint Lord of the Gobi (*Nyamgavaa*)
Tokyo Story (*Ozu*)
The Line of Destiny (*Peries*)
Ugetsu monogatari (*Mizoguchi*)
Man of the Story/
Kathapurushnan (*Gopalakrishnan*)
Children of Heaven (*Majidi*)

GENEVÈVE SELLIER

France, professor of cinema studies, Université Michel de Montaigne, Bordeaux

The Best Years of Our Lives (*Wyler*)
The Chapman Report (*Cukor*)
Falbalas/Paris Frills (*Becker*)
Le Lait de la tendresse humaine/The Milk of Human Kindness (*Cabrera*)
Minne, l'ingénue libertine (*Audry*)

Rebecca (*Hitchcock*)
Party Girl (*N. Ray*)
Lumière d'été (*Grémillon*)
Three Rooms in Manhattan (*Carné*)
La Vérité sur Bébé Donge/The Truth About Bébé Donge (*Decoin*)
 All those ten films, American and French, propose very acute explorations of female experiences, desires, sufferings and attempts at emancipation. Most of them are made by male filmmakers, but the most recent one is a woman's film: *Le Lait de la tendresse humaine* (*The Milk of Human Kindness*), by Dominique Cabrera.

KEITH SHIRI

UK, curator and director, Africa at the Pictures

Xala (*Sembene*)
Daratt (*Haroun*)
A Separation (*Farhadi*)
Waiting for Happiness (*Sissako*)
Touki-Bouki (*Mambéty*)
The Nine Muses (*Akomfrah*)
Teza (*Grime*)
Bicycle Thieves (*De Sica*)
The Battle of Algiers (*Pontecorvo*)
Mother (*Bong*)

IAIN SINCLAIR

UK, writer

In alphabetical order (by director):
Il grido (*Antonioni*)
The Act of Seeing with One's Own Eyes (*Brakhage*)
Mouchette (*Bresson*)
Los olvidados (*Buñuel*)
Gertrud (*Dreyer*)
Berlin Alexanderplatz (*Fassbinder*)
Germany Year 90 Nine
Zero (*Godard*)
The Testament of Dr Mabuse (*Lang*)
Le Deuxième Souffle (*Melville*)
The Rise to Power of Louis XIV (*Rossellini*)
 The museum aspect of pretending to select the 'ten greatest films of all time' is surely redundant. I have combined the strategic short-termism of films that are feeding current projects with memory landscapes from a curated past. Every entry here has a subterranean, disregarded double. But that would be another game. Ten is too few, a couple short of a set of disciples. And too many, shadows of the one, the great film yet to be made.

ALI SMITH

UK, novelist

Pandora's Box (*Pabst*)
Céline and Julie Go

With 'The Matrix', what seemed to be a fad has become a film-history landmark, both technologically and for tapping the zeitgeist

Fernanda Solórzano

Boating (*Rivette*)
The Circus (*Chaplin*)
Blackmail (*Hitchcock*)
Mädchen in Uniform (*Sagan & Froelich*)
Meet Me in St. Louis (*Minnelli*)
My Childhood (*Douglas*)
Napoleon (*Gance*)
Nights of Cabiria (*Fellini*)
Tout est pardonné (*Hansen-Løve*)
 I am in mourning for the so many films all crowding behind this ten. I may have nightmares for weeks.

GAVIN SMITH

US, editor, 'Film Comment'

Diary of a Country Priest (*Bresson*)
The Films of Nathaniel Dorsky
Nouvelle vague (*Godard*)
Platform (*Jia*)
Psycho (*Hitchcock*)
Raging Bull (*Scorsese*)
She Wore a Yellow Ribbon (*Ford*)
Shoah (*Lanzmann*)
Sunrise: A Song of Two Humans (*Murnau*)
2001: A Space Odyssey (*Kubrick*)

FERNANDA SOLÓRZANO

Mexico, critic

Vertigo (*Hitchcock*)
The Godfather Part II (*Coppola*)
The Matrix (*Wachowski & Wachowski*)
Nosferatu (*Murnau*)
Mulholland Dr. (*Lynch*)
Rashomon (*Kurosawa*)
Blade Runner (*Scott*)
Sunset Blvd. (*Wilder*)
8½ (*Fellini*)
Citizen Kane (*Welles*)
 With *The Matrix*, what seemed to be a fad has become a film-history landmark, both technologically and for so effectively tapping the zeitgeist. Non-linear narratives had already been explored in film, but Lynch took the form to a different and unique level in *Mulholland Dr.*

CLARE STEWART

Australia/UK, head of exhibition, BFI

Written on the Wind (*Sirk*)
Days of Being Wild (*Wong*)
Beau Travail (*Denis*)
The Cameraman (*Keaton*)
The Spirit of the Beehive (*Erice*)
The Life and Death of Colonel Blimp (*Powell & Pressburger*)
Throne of Blood (*Kurosawa*)
Wake in Fright (*Kotcheff*)
Sullivan's Travels (*Sturges*)
A Separation (*Farhadi*)

My list is led by emotion. These are the films to which I return, the films that make my heart sing, that have transformed my perception of cinema and what it can be. Films that make me want to dance with the thrill of being alive and having cinema to prove it (and the top three all have liberating solo dance sequences: Dorothy Malone, Leslie Cheung, Denis Lavant).

This list will be different tomorrow (when it will include *The Night of the Hunter*, *Cleo from 5 to 7*, *Safe*, *Hunger*, *The Shop Around the Corner* and *Leone*, *Fassbinder*, *Ceylan*, *Woo* and *July*). Lurking in the shadows of this list (and tomorrow's) are a great many beloved films, but today I feel like giving a nod to four short films that almost



4 LA REGLE DU JEU

JEAN RENOIR

by James Bell

When the first critics' poll ran in 1952, *La Règle du jeu* came joint tenth, but it's remarkable that the film appeared at all, for voters wouldn't have been able to see Renoir's masterpiece in anything like the form we know today. A peerlessly fluid ensemble drama, the film depicts the events that ensue when guests and staff drawn from all strata of French society gather at the country chateau of the Marquis de la Cheyniest for a hunting weekend, Renoir capturing the seething passions, jealousies and class tensions of everyone present with virtuoso skill and genuine empathy. The film's unsparing depiction of French life in 1939 – from crumbling aristocracy to rife anti-semitism – proved explosive in a country beset with divisions, and offered grave forebodings of defeat in the imminent war.

Following a disastrously received premiere of a truncated edit of the film, Renoir agreed to further cuts, only to see his 'demoralising' and 'unpatriotic' film banned anyway by the French government in October 1939. The original negative was destroyed in a bombing raid during the war, and for years the film could only be seen in butchered versions, until 200 cans of outtakes were discovered in 1956 and the film was restored to close to its original form. Three years after its triumphant resurrection at the Venice Film Festival in 1959, *La Règle du jeu* came third in the 1962 poll – a position it has hovered around ever since. Where other films have risen or fallen with prevailing critical tides, Renoir's film has remained astonishingly steady.

"Everyone has their reasons," says Octave, the character played by Renoir himself, in the film's most famous line of dialogue – one often taken as the purest expression of the director's own humanistic tolerance. It's a sentiment that's easy to accept but harder to portray on film, and yet in *La Règle du jeu* that's just what Renoir achieves, his roaming camera capturing everything without judgement, every character and every exchange ringing true.



3 TOKYO STORY

OZU YASUJIRO

by James Bell

It's one of the well-told legends of cinema history that the glories of Japanese cinema were first revealed to Western audiences when Kurosawa's *Rashomon* screened at the Venice Film Festival in 1951. However, despite Ozu's high status in Japan, critical appreciation in the West took much longer to come to him than it did to Kurosawa and Mizoguchi. Mizoguchi's *Ugetsu monogatari* appeared in the 1962 and 1972 top tens, and Kurosawa's *Seven Samurai* in the 1982 list, but it wasn't until 1992 that *Tokyo Story* first appeared, coming third.

The absence of Ozu's 1953 film – about an elderly couple who travel to Tokyo to visit their children, only to find them all indifferent – can partly be explained by availability, for according to Donald Richie, it wasn't until 1958 that it was first screened in the UK, under the title *Their First Trip to Tokyo*; it was only when Richie organised a programme of five Ozu films at the 1963

Berlin Film Festival that interest really began to spread.

Books on Ozu's work by Richie, Noël Burch, Paul Schrader and David Bordwell followed, and his reputation steadily grew – in this year's poll, Ozu's *Late Spring* is the second highest-ranking Japanese film, sitting just above *Seven Samurai*. Ozu's delicate, formally precise films now chime with critical opinion in ways that the muscular Kurosawa and flowing Mizoguchi styles do not.

Ozu used to liken himself to a "tofu-maker", in reference to the way his films – at least the post-war ones – were all variations on a small number of themes. So why is it *Tokyo Story* that is acclaimed by most as his masterpiece? DVD releases have made available such prewar films as *I Was Born, But...*, and yet the Ozu vote has not been split, and *Tokyo Story* has actually climbed two places since 2002. It may simply be that in *Tokyo Story* this most Japanese tofu-maker refined his art to the point of perfection, and crafted a truly universal film about family, time and loss.



 made the list: Lois Weber and Phillips Smalley's *Suspense*, *La Jettée*, Sadie Benning's *If Every Girl Had a Diary* and Guy Maddin's *The Heart of the World*.

MATTHEW SWEET

UK, historian and broadcaster

Battleship Potemkin (*Eisenstein*)
Citizen Kane (*Welles*)
Days of Heaven (*Malick*)
Great Expectations (*Lean*)
The Kid (*Chaplin*)
Kind Hearts and Coronets (*Hamer*)
King Kong (*Cooper & Schoedsack*)
Napoleon (*Gance*)
The Third Man (*Reed*)
The Wizard of Oz (*Fleming*)

I feel the ghosts of Hitchcock, Billy Wilder and Cavalcanti will be gathering to push me down the stairs tonight.

Looking at this list it seems clear that I have a problematic relationship with colour, though I'll say in my defence that so much in the cinema of the last 50 years seems a refinement or a reworking of work from its first 50 – and the echoes of these ten films are, I think, everywhere in contemporary film. And a picture from the 1980s or after still feels too young for canonical status.

ALIN TASCIVAN

Turkey, critic

Hiroshima mon amour (*Resnais*)
The Travelling Players (*Angelopoulos*)
Man with a Movie Camera (*Dziga Vertov*)
Csontváry (*Huszárík*)
Andrei Rublev (*Tarkovsky*)
L'eclisse (*Antonioni*)
Modern Times (*Chaplin*)
The Colour of Pomegranates (*Parajanov*)
Baraka (*Fricke*)
Metropolis (*Lang*)
 Choosing only ten has been a very painful process for me. I feel like a mother who left her children behind!

AMY TAUBIN

US, Artforum

La Règle du jeu (*Renoir*)
Vertigo (*Hitchcock*)
Au hasard Balthazar (*Bresson*)
Man with a Movie Camera (*Dziga Vertov*)
Two or Three Things I Know About Her (*Godard*)
Shoah (*Lanzmann*)
Jeanne d'Arc (*Delannoy*)
du Commerce 1080 (*Bruxelles*)
Screen Tests (*Warhol*)
Ikiru (*Kurosawa*)
Cosmopolis (*Cronenberg*)
 Ridiculous exercise! Shouldn't it be 25 greatest by now? How can I leave out *Late Spring*, *Topsy-Turvy*, *A Woman Under the Influence*, *Inland Empire*, *Germany Year Zero*, *L'Age d'or*, *L'Atlantide*, *Barry Lyndon*, *Killer of Sheep*, *Orpheus*, *Xala*, *Imitation of Life*, *The Uncertainty Principle*, *Fear Eats the Soul*, *Angry Harvest* and on and on. Or perhaps I should have named only *Histoire(s) du cinéma* – no more idiosyncratic than this list, and far more generous.

KRISTIN THOMPSON

US, honorary fellow, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Play Time (*Tati*)
Late Spring (*Ozu*)
Ivan the Terrible (*Eisenstein*)
La Règle du jeu (*Renoir*)
M (*Lang*)
The General (*Keaton & Bruckman*)
Through the Olive Trees (*Kiarostami*)
How Green Was My Valley (*Ford*)
Rear Window (*Hitchcock*)
The Passion of Joan of Arc (*Dreyer*)

Making up a list of ten films to constitute the pinnacle of world cinema means, to a considerable extent, choosing the greatest directors and picking one film to represent each. To me, the greatest directors are Tati, Ozu and Eisenstein. For Tati and Eisenstein, the best films are clear to me. For Ozu, there could be any of at least half a dozen films plausibly chosen for this list, but *Late Spring* happens to be my favourite.

Inevitably there are other films that I much regret not being able to include on the list, such as *Seven Samurai*, *Trouble in Paradise*, *His Girl Friday*, *Sjöström's The Phantom Carriage* and *Capellani's Germinal*. (The silent era is too little represented in previous polls, but restorations by archives and retrospectives at specialist film festivals make this lack easier to remedy.) Had Orson Welles's *The Magnificent Ambersons* not been re-cut by RKO, it would probably be on my list.

There are other directors who should be represented here, most notably Bresson, Mizoguchi and Godard. Their work is so consistent, however, that I simply cannot choose a single masterpiece by any of them.

I felt that a film more recent than 1974 (*The Godfather Part II*, the latest film represented on previous S&S lists) should be included. The last four decades of film history have surely seen the release of at least one worthy film, but the vast expansion of production in smaller countries and the international exhibition of such films in festivals have rendered it more difficult than ever for critics to agree upon a single candidate. It remains easier to vote for the established classics. My choice of a film that deserves to be watched and rewatched decades from now, as we currently watch such films as *La Règle du jeu*, is *Through the Olive Trees* (or *Under the Olive Trees*, to give a more accurate translation than the usual).

DAVID THOMSON

UK/US, critic

Blue Velvet (*Lynch*)
Céline and Julie Go Boating (*Rivette*)
Citizen Kane (*Welles*)
The Conformist (*Bertolucci*)
Hiroshima mon amour (*Resnais*)
His Girl Friday (*Hawks*)
Pierrot le fou (*Godard*)
La Règle du jeu (*Renoir*)
The Shop Around the Corner (*Lubitsch*)
Ugetsu monogatari (*Mizoguchi*)

KATA ANNA VÁRÓ

Hungary, lecturer and programme advisor, Titanic International Film Festival, Budapest

2001: A Space Odyssey (*Kubrick*)
Andrei Rublev (*Tarkovsky*)
Blowup (*Antonioni*)
Blue Velvet (*Lynch*)
Hidden (*Haneke*)
Chungking Express (*Wong*)
Cries and Whispers (*Bergman*)
Last Year in Marienbad (*Resnais*)
Rashomon (*Kurosawa*)
 The majority of the films I have picked come from the middle of the last century, which witnessed a major change in cinematic storytelling, film form and style, especially in Europe.

Bergman's *Fanny and Alexander* may be the most appreciated of his films, but the lavish setting, the rich colours and textures paired with suffocating atmosphere and the rigour of Chekhov's plays make *Cries and Whispers* the most outstanding of his works. Kubrick's, Tarr's and Lynch's metaphysical ventures through time and space into the human psyche haven't failed to mesmerise moviegoers and academics alike throughout the years.

With *Hidden* Haneke took both the thriller genre and the role of a filmmaker in the narrative to a whole new level and made this racially engaged chiller as unsettling as it could get. When it comes to secret desires, quiet longings, little obsessions and unrequited love, no one does them better than Wong Kar-Wai, the Hong Kong master of genre-bending melodramas.

NOEL VERA

Philippines, critic, 'Businessworld'

Late Spring (*Ozu*)
Chimes at Midnight (*Welles*)
Faust (*Murnau*)
Diary of a Country Priest (*Bresson*)
Kaagaz Ke Phool/Paper Flowers (*Dutt*)
Nausicaa of the Valley of the Wind (*Miyazaki*)
M (*Lang*)
The Cloud-Capped Star (*Ghatak*)
Sherlock Jr. (*Keaton*)
Tatlong Taong Walang Diyos/Three Years Without God (*O'Hara*)
 I look at how well the filmmaker translates his passion, at the intensity of said passion, and listen to the feeling in my gut that tells me: "This is one."

Guru Dutt's *film maudit*, a titanic box-office flop, is one of the best

'The Cloud-Capped Star' is a neorealist masterwork – one of the most heartrending depictions ever of female oppression

Noel Vera

films ever about a filmmaker's passion for his work. From Miyazaki, one of the few science-fiction films to deal with ecological systems and the environment – arguably the greatest animated film ever made. From Ghatak, a neorealist masterwork – one of the most heartrending depictions ever of female oppression.

And from Mario O'Hara, the rare film from a victimised nation (in this case the Philippines) that strives to understand, perhaps even forgive, the invader.

GINETTE VINCENTEAU

UK, professor, King's College London

Cleo from 5 to 7 (*Varda*)
Le Corbeau (*Clouzot*)
Do the Right Thing (*Lee*)
La Grande Illusion (*Renoir*)
La Haine (*Kassovitz*)
The Leopard (*Visconti*)
Le Mépris (*Godard*)
Le Samourai (*Melville*)
Touchez pas au grisbi (*Becker*)
Wild Strawberries (*Bergman*)
 This reflects the national cinemas, genres and actors I know best rather than an all-encompassing view of the cinema.

PETER VON BAGH

Finland/Italy, critic, historian and director, Midnight Sun Film Festival and II Cinema Ritrovato

My list as 'critic/historian':
The Wedding March (*von Stroheim*)
Angèle (*Pagnol*)
Only Angels Have Wings (*Hawks*)
A Canterbury Tale (*Powell & Pressburger*)
Ivan the Terrible Part II (*Eisenstein*)
Iris och lejonhjärtan/Iris and the Lieutenant (*Sjöberg*)
Late Spring (*Ozu*)
Distant Drums (*Walsh*)
Party Girl (*N. Ray*)
Nazarin (*Buñuel*)
 I was approached by two different letters, with different deadlines, and I have proceeded accordingly. Which means that I have hereby two lists, entirely different, and corresponding to my schizophrenia about the roles that were the cause of the two letters.

MARINA WARNER

UK, professor of literature, film and theatre studies, University of Essex

The Adventures of Prince Achmed (*Reiniger*)
The Apartment (*Wilder*)
Bringing up Baby (*Hawks*)
Céline and Julie Go Boating (*Rivette*)
The Devil's Backbone (*del Toro*)
Dodes'ka-den (*Kurosawa*)
Lucía (*Solás*)
The Gleaners & I (*Varda*)
The Passion of Joan of Arc (*Dreyer*)
Donkey Skin (*Demy*)
 Cinema works for me as a charm'd magic casement, making possible in image and action all manner of impossible experiences, realised as if they could happen and are happening. I haven't chosen surrealist films as such, as they convey inner worlds of dream. This list presents fantasy as lived experience, some of it extremely funny. The Varda is there, too,

because she uses the camera with such deep empathy for her subjects, as does Kurosawa.

SERGIO WOLF

Argentina, critic and filmmaker

Citizen Kane (*Welles*)
The Quince Tree Sun (*Erice*)
Le Mépris (*Godard*)
Rear Window (*Hitchcock*)
Shoah (*Lanzmann*)
The Godfather (*Coppola*)
The House on Trubnaya Street (*Barnet*)
The Passenger (*Antonioni*)
The Searchers (*Ford*)
Traffic (*Tati*)
 These ten films are for me the more innovative in the different 'moments' of cinema. All of them propose a cross between reality and artifice, between genre and style, between tradition and experimentation, between classicism and modernity. Each of them has meant an opening of borders and boundaries of cinema, and has asked about what film is.

MICHAEL WOOD

UK/US, professor of English, Princeton University

The Passion of Joan of Arc (*Dreyer*)
Los olvidados (*Buñuel*)
Ugetsu monogatari (*Mizoguchi*)
Wild Strawberries (*Bergman*)
Ivan the Terrible Part II (*Eisenstein*)
Touch of Evil (*Welles*)
Some Like It Hot (*Wilder*)
The Leopard (*Visconti*)
Ran (*Kurosawa*)
Werckmeister Harmonies (*Tarr*)
 The list is a bit more nostalgic than I expected it to be, and more clustered around the 1950s – but it gets worse, or further from my idea of things, as I tinker with it, so I'll stop. Criteria for 'greatest' here are multiple, consistent only in the sense of being strict in their different ways: films you can't shake from your mind, films you can't imagine the history of cinema without, films that are the best imaginable in their kind, films that get better every time you watch them, and so on.

SLAVOJ ZIZEK

Slovenia, critic and philosopher

Noi Vivi/We the Living (*Alessandrini*)
Hitman (*Gens*)
Hero (*Zhang*)
Opfergang (*Harlan*)
The Fountainhead (*Vidor*)
The Sound of Music (*Wise*)
Dune (*Lynch*)
3.10 to Yuma (*Daves*)
Nightmare Alley (*Goulding*)
On Dangerous Ground (*N. Ray*)
 This time, I opted for pure madness: the list contains only 'guilty pleasures', from two screen versions of Ayn Rand to a top Nazi melodrama, from David Lynch's greatest flop to the top musical kitsch, from a low-budget Hollywood action thriller to a Chinese big-budget historical spectacle, plus a half-forgotten western and two marginal noirs. This is what I really enjoy – no compromises with high quality or good taste.



2 CITIZEN KANE

ORSON WELLES

by Nick James

Yes, it's true. *Kane* is no longer the immovable object of cinema appreciation. But let's leave any re-examination of the film and its legacy to others. Let us instead, for fun, imagine Orson Welles receiving the news. Even in his youth and middle age, Welles played so many old men on screen so convincingly – from Kane himself to Hank Quinlan to Falstaff – that it's not difficult to imagine him at the age he'd be if he were still alive: a portly 97, sitting in his favourite restaurant Ma Maison (alas no longer with us either), smoking, eating and talking all at once, in a voice that had only grown more gravelly with the passing years.

"What," he would snarl, and backhand a glass into the wall. Then, after a moment, with half a smile, his voice would soften to a purr, his eyes beaming amusement.

"Kane no longer the best, you say? And which pompous, baubled hippopotamus in a wig bows now in my stead? Hitchcock is it? Oh well, I was wrong about the wig, but he's big enough, that's for sure. A little lacking in

panache, don't you think, but plenty of girth?"

Falling quiet, he'd pull harder on his cigar, and mutter as if to himself, "Who loses and who wins; who's in and who's out... Packs and sects of great ones that ebb and flow by the moon.' I guess that's me from now on: Lear lost in lost glory. Old Hearst must be laughing – he'll be glad-handing the pimps."

Then the grand old man would stagger to his feet, perhaps propelled on walking sticks like Everett Sloane in *The Lady from Shanghai*, his voice gradually fading as he wandered further off, trailing perfect strands of white cigar smoke. "You know I never thought *Kane* was my best," he'd say. "Not bad for a beginner – and better than anything those Hollywood numbskulls ever dreamed up. But if I'd had money to make them properly, it would be pretty clear to everyone that *Chimes at Midnight* and *Touch of Evil* would have been better yet. And as for *Ambersons*..."

Kane is dead. Long live Welles.



1 VERTIGO

ALFRED HITCHCOCK

by Peter Matthews

After half a century of monopolising the top spot, *Citizen Kane* was beginning to look smugly inviolable. Call it *Schadenfreude*, but let's rejoice that this now conventional and ritualised symbol of 'the greatest' has finally been taken down a peg. The accession of *Vertigo* is hardly in the nature of a *coup d'état*. Tying for 11th place in 1972, Hitchcock's masterpiece steadily inched up the poll over the next three decades, and by 2002 was clearly the heir apparent. Still, even ardent Wellesians should feel gratified at the modest revolution – if only for the proof that film canons (and the versions of history they legitimate) are not completely fossilised.

There may be no larger significance in the bare fact that a couple of films made in California 17 years apart have traded numerical rankings on a whimsically impressionistic list. Yet the human urge to interpret chance phenomena will not be denied, and *Vertigo* is a crafty, duplicitous machine for spinning meaning. At the very least, its championship bout with *Kane* affords a pretext to reflect on two different myths of cinema. I doubt whether my personal recollection of either film is unique. When I first saw *Kane* at a revival in the mid-1970s, I enjoyed the typical sensation of being knocked out. No other movie before or since has quite so astounded me with its sheer muscular virtuosity – a bombastic compendium of every known trick that epitomises the thrilling exhibitionist possibilities of the medium. In short, *Kane* fulfils the idea of total cinema. As such, it remains a permanent touchstone for all young filmmakers who seek to flaunt their wares, aiming wide instead of deep. If Welles's hammy pyrotechnics fail to smite me as they once did, it may be that I no longer need them.

Reciprocally, I have grown into *Vertigo*. My initial response (on the occasion of a 1984 rerelease together with

four other Hitchcock classics) was mild disappointment. Though admiring its pictorial splendour, I found Kim Novak gauche, the plot baloney and the whole enterprise lacking the master's customary snap. I never supposed that I was merely retracing the steps of the film's original Anglo-American critics. In 1958, John McCarten of *The New Yorker* had lambasted it as "far-fetched nonsense", while Arthur Knight of *Saturday Review* crabbed that "technical facility is being exploited to gild pure dross". As for *Sight & Sound*, editor Penelope Houston's verdict was snuffy at best: "One is agreeably used to Hitchcock repeating his effects, but this time he is repeating himself in slow motion." How a band of lunatic French cinephiles intervened with the scandalous suggestion that a popular entertainer might be a serious artist – and gradually won the non-auteurist heathen to their creed – is too familiar a tale to belabour here. Suffice to say that I too was dismally behind the beat. I still thought of Hitchcock as a crackerjack marksman who in *Vertigo* had overshot the target.

My epiphany occurred 20 years later when I was obliged to teach the film on an undergraduate course. Perhaps the most emphatic conversions are the fruit of subliminal waiting. All I know is that everything I had judged wrong about *Vertigo* suddenly, alchemically seemed right. The gilded dross was transformed into pure cinema. Hitchcock regularly brandished the phrase,

The pleasure principle of Hollywood cinema succumbs to the death instinct. Never has a work of ostensible light entertainment been this dark

yet – not conspicuous for his metaphysical leanings – understood it simply to express the practical resources by which film declares its independence. Editing, camera movement, sound design owe little to the prior arts; even *mise en scène*, with its roots in stagecraft, becomes *sui generis* through the infinite mutability of screen space. The challenges of sovereignty are terrifying, however, and most filmmakers cravenly fall back on the inherited armature of theatre: well-told stories, plausible characters, good performances. Hitchcock's famous distrust of both actors and screenwriters certified an absolute visual élan that would brook no contradiction. For all that, he was far from being an accursed renegade like Welles. His genius rested on unconditional faith in the studio system and its mission of delivering smartly packaged escapism to a broad audience.

But if Hitchcock religiously ticks the boxes of classical Hollywood style, he also bends them to his autocratic will. *Rear Window* lifts ordinary point-of-view shots to a new level of cold ruthlessness, thereby exposing the seedy voyeuristic illusion at the heart of cinematic pleasure. *Vertigo*, which concerns the effort to model a real woman into an ideal, is nowadays commonly diagnosed as another reflexive text: the ultimate demystification of stardom and its origins in male fantasy. Such rational readings hold water, but leave me dissatisfied. They cannot account for a delirious excess that paradoxically borders on abstraction and renders the film a true nonpareil in Hitchcock's career.

Early reviewers who savaged the idiocy of the plot were in their way more prescient. Let me spare any existing *Vertigo* novices the details. Basically, we are asked to swallow that, in order for a murder to appear a suicide, criminal mastermind Gavin Elster (Tom Helmore) can rely on the acrophobia of traumatised ex-cop Scottie Ferguson (James Stewart) kicking in at the precise moment needed. (In his famous interview with François Truffaut, Hitchcock volunteers that this is a “flaw in the story” that still “bothers” him.) One may blame the source material, Boileau-Narcejac's 1954 potboiler *D'entre les morts*; yet having engineered this baroque conspiracy, the script (by Alec Coppel and Samuel Taylor) then blows the whistle in an eccentrically timed flashback that genre fans still quarrel over. Identifying a structural flaw, Hitchcock even reportedly got cold feet and wanted to remove the sequence at the last minute, but was talked out of recalling prints for re-editing by Paramount.

The problem was bigger than he imagined. For in *Vertigo*, the tightly knit fabric of classical narrative starts to unravel. Who knows why this was happening, but television is the usual suspect. Confronted by its pipsqueak rival, 1950s Hollywood answered with spectacle – laying on panoramic colour extravaganzas for which traditional story was an increasingly slender alibi. The CGI-led blockbusters of our own era constitute the endgame in this disintegrative process, their loosely episodic form resembling beads on a string more than the intricate lockstep of cause and effect. Though Hitchcock cheerfully slept with the enemy when required, *Vertigo* is one of the plush exercises whereby a panicky industry hoped to recoup its dwindling figures. But here, the cinema of attractions yields an intense, surrealist poetry. As Scottie goes driving, driving around San Francisco in pursuit of his chimerical love interest Madeleine (Novak),



ENTRANCED
The obsessive quest of Scottie (James Stewart) for lost love Madeleine (Kim Novak, also far left) has a dreamlike feel; below, Alfred Hitchcock

the action resolves into elaborate set pieces: the visit to the flower shop, the churchyard, the art museum, the McKittrick Hotel, the Golden Gate Bridge, the sequoia forest. It could be a sightseer's itinerary, and indeed every year flocks of cinephiles do the ‘Vertigo tour’. That such an institution has evolved is not surprising, for the movie holds a singular power to contaminate viewers with its own quality of dreamy obsession.

Hitchcock's best critic Robin Wood describes the San Francisco locations as “little pockets of silence and solitude”, both attaching to the city and somehow outside it. The silence is not literal, given Bernard Herrmann's throbbing, Wagnerian score. Yet the alternation between long, dialogue-free passages and scenes of talky exposition creates a strange, sluggish rhythm that waxes ever more ceremonial and trancelike. Robert Burks's glamorising cinematography (with its liberal use of fog filters) raises each place into a distinct fetish, isolated from the exigencies of plot.

Classical narrative pushes relentlessly forward. *Vertigo* stalls, rambles, repeats (three meals at Ernie's restaurant, three chases up the fatal bell tower). The goal-oriented, mystery-solving hero that Stewart essayed in previous Hitchcock films now loses confidence, drifting in perpetual circles. The entropy that afflicts Scottie brings him within striking distance of Antonioni's listless, world-weary universe. His fear of heights is nominally cured through extremity; but if he starts by hanging over one abyss, he finishes by staring into another.

So it is that the pleasure principle of Hollywood cinema succumbs to the death instinct. For behind Scottie's obscure compulsion to possess Madeleine/Judy lurks a desire for nothingness – the ecstasy of sinking forgetfully into the One. Never has a work of ostensible light entertainment been this dark.

Filmmaker and theorist Jean Epstein had his own word for pure cinema: *photogénie*. Once it had relinquished the “historical”, the “educational” and the “novelistic”, he believed, the camera lens in conjunction with the film author's personality would illuminate the inner “moral value” of things. That's just what occurs in *Vertigo*. When Judy, having reluctantly agreed to pin up her bleached hair in exact conformity with the lost object Madeleine, advances through the green neon haze of her shabby hotel room, both Scottie and we catch an unspeakable glimpse of the sublime.

Modern, civilised Midge (Barbara Bel Geddes) may mock Scottie's fascination – and, of course, it all turns out to be a shell game perpetrated by arch-choreographer Elster (or his accomplice, Hitchcock). But that's cinema – an organised lie that gestures, however dumbly, at truth.



THE TOP 100 FILMS



Film Title	Votes
1 Vertigo (<i>Hitchcock</i> , 1958)	191
2 Citizen Kane (<i>Welles</i> , 1941)	157
3 Tokyo Story (<i>Ozu</i> , 1953)	107
4 La Règle du jeu (<i>Renoir</i> , 1939)	100
5 Sunrise: A Song of Two Humans (<i>Murnau</i> , 1927)	93
6 2001: A Space Odyssey (<i>Kubrick</i> , 1968)	90
7 The Searchers (<i>Ford</i> , 1956)	78
8 Man with a Movie Camera (<i>Dziga Vertov</i> , 1929)	68
9 The Passion of Joan of Arc (<i>Dreyer</i> , 1927)	65
10 8½ (<i>Fellini</i> , 1963)	64
11 Battleship Potemkin (<i>Eisenstein</i> , 1925)	63
12 L'Atalante (<i>Vigo</i> , 1934)	58
13 Breathless (<i>Godard</i> , 1960)	57
14 Apocalypse Now (<i>Coppola</i> , 1979)	53
15 Late Spring (<i>Ozu</i> , 1949)	50
16 Au hasard Balthazar (<i>Bresson</i> , 1966)	49
17 Seven Samurai (<i>Kurosawa</i> , 1954)	48
= Persona (<i>Bergman</i> , 1966)	48
19 Mirror (<i>Tarkovsky</i> , 1974)	47
20 Singin' in the Rain (<i>Donen & Kelly</i> , 1951)	46
21 L'avventura (<i>Antonioni</i> , 1960)	43
= Le Mépris (<i>Godard</i> , 1963)	43
= The Godfather (<i>Coppola</i> , 1972)	43
24 Ordet (<i>Dreyer</i> , 1955)	42
= In the Mood for Love (<i>Wong</i> , 2000)	42
26 Rashomon (<i>Kurosawa</i> , 1950)	41
= Andrei Rublev (<i>Tarkovsky</i> , 1966)	41
28 Mulholland Dr. (<i>Lynch</i> , 2001)	40
29 Stalker (<i>Tarkovsky</i> , 1979)	39
= Shoah (<i>Lanzmann</i> , 1985)	39
31 The Godfather Part II (<i>Coppola</i> , 1974)	38
= Taxi Driver (<i>Scorsese</i> , 1976)	38
33 Bicycle Thieves (<i>De Sica</i> , 1948)	37
34 The General (<i>Keaton & Bruckman</i> , 1926)	35
35 Metropolis (<i>Lang</i> , 1927)	34
= Psycho (<i>Hitchcock</i> , 1960)	34
= Jeanne Dielman, 23 quai du Commerce 1080 Bruxelles (<i>Akerman</i> , 1975)	34
= Sátántangó (<i>Tarr</i> , 1984)	34
39 The 400 Blows (<i>Truffaut</i> , 1959)	33
= La dolce vita (<i>Fellini</i> , 1960)	33
41 Journey to Italy (<i>Rossellini</i> , 1954)	32
42 Pather Panchali (<i>Satyajit Ray</i> , 1955)	31
= Some Like It Hot (<i>Wilder</i> , 1959)	31
= Gertrud (<i>Dreyer</i> , 1964)	31
= Pierrot le fou (<i>Godard</i> , 1965)	31
= Play Time (<i>Tati</i> , 1967)	31
= Close-Up (<i>Kiarostami</i> , 1990)	31
48 The Battle of Algiers (<i>Pontecorvo</i> , 1966)	30
= Histoire(s) du cinéma (<i>Godard</i> , 1998)	30
50 City Lights (<i>Chaplin</i> , 1931)	29
= Ugetsu monogatari (<i>Mizoguchi</i> , 1953)	29

Film Title	Votes
= La Jetée (<i>Marker</i> , 1962)	29
53 Rear Window (<i>Hitchcock</i> , 1954)	28
= North by Northwest (<i>Hitchcock</i> , 1959)	28
= Raging Bull (<i>Scorsese</i> , 1980)	28
56 M (<i>Lang</i> , 1931)	26
= Touch of Evil (<i>Welles</i> , 1958)	26
= The Leopard (<i>Visconti</i> , 1963)	26
59 Sherlock Jr. (<i>Keaton</i> , 1924)	25
= Sansho dayu (<i>Mizoguchi</i> , 1954)	25
= La Maman et la Putain (<i>Eustache</i> , 1973)	25
= Barry Lyndon (<i>Kubrick</i> , 1975)	25
63 Modern Times (<i>Chaplin</i> , 1936)	24
= Sunset Blvd. (<i>Wilder</i> , 1950)	24
= The Night of the Hunter (<i>Laughton</i> , 1955)	24
= Wild Strawberries (<i>Bergman</i> , 1957)	24
= Rio Bravo (<i>Hawks</i> , 1958)	24
= Pickpocket (<i>Bresson</i> , 1959)	24
69 A Man Escaped (<i>Bresson</i> , 1956)	23
= Blade Runner (<i>Scott</i> , 1982)	23
= Sans soleil (<i>Marker</i> , 1982)	23
= Blue Velvet (<i>Lynch</i> , 1986)	23
73 La Grande Illusion (<i>Renoir</i> , 1937)	22
= Les Enfants du paradis (<i>Carné</i> , 1945)	22
= The Third Man (<i>Reed</i> , 1949)	22
= L'eclisse (<i>Antonioni</i> , 1962)	22
= Nashville (<i>Altman</i> , 1975)	22
78 Once upon a Time in the West (<i>Leone</i> , 1968)	21
= Chinatown (<i>Polanski</i> , 1974)	21
= Beau Travail (<i>Denis</i> , 1998)	21
81 The Magnificent Ambersons (<i>Welles</i> , 1942)	20
= Lawrence of Arabia (<i>Lean</i> , 1962)	20
= The Spirit of the Beehive (<i>Erice</i> , 1973)	20
84 Greed (<i>von Stroheim</i> , 1925)	19
= Casablanca (<i>Curtiz</i> , 1942)	19
= The Colour of Pomegranates (<i>Parajanov</i> , 1968)	19
= The Wild Bunch (<i>Peckinpah</i> , 1969)	19
= Fanny and Alexander (<i>Bergman</i> , 1984)	19
= A Brighter Summer Day (<i>Yang</i> , 1991)	19
90 Partie de campagne (<i>Renoir</i> , 1936)	18
= A Matter of Life and Death (<i>Powell & Pressburger</i> , 1946)	18
= Aguirre, Wrath of God (<i>Herzog</i> , 1972)	18
93 Intolerance (<i>Griffith</i> , 1916)	17
= Un chien andalou (<i>Buñuel</i> , 1928)	17
= The Life and Death of Colonel Blimp (<i>Powell & Pressburger</i> , 1943)	17
= Madame de... (<i>Ophüls</i> , 1953)	17
= The Seventh Seal (<i>Bergman</i> , 1957)	17
= Imitation of Life (<i>Sirk</i> , 1959)	17
= Touki-Bouki (<i>Diop Mambéty</i> , 1973)	17
= A One and a Two (<i>Yang</i> , 2000)	17

CHRONICLE OF A FALL FORETOLD

Beyond the ousting of the once impregnable 'Citizen Kane' from the top spot, what else can we learn about changing critical tastes from the 2012 list of the 100 greatest films of all time?

By Ian Christie

21: L'AVVENTURA



And the loser is – *Citizen Kane*. After 50 years at the top of the *Sight & Sound* poll, Orson Welles's debut film has been convincingly ousted by Alfred Hitchcock's 45th feature *Vertigo* – and by a whopping 34 votes, compared with the mere five that separated them a decade ago. So what does it mean? Given that *Kane* actually clocked over three times as many votes this year as it did last time, it hasn't exactly been snubbed by the vastly larger number of voters taking part in this new poll, which has spread its net far wider than any of its six predecessors (see below), asking nearly 850 critics, programmers and academics for their top tens.

But it does mean that Hitchcock, who only entered the top ten in 1982 (two years after his death), has risen steadily in esteem over the course of 30 years, with *Vertigo* climbing from seventh place, to fourth in 1992, second in 2002 and now first, to make him the Old Master. Welles, uniquely, had two films (*The Magnificent Ambersons* as well as *Kane*) in the list in 1972 and 1982, but now *Ambersons* has slipped to 81st place in the top 100.

So does 2012 – the first poll to be conducted since the internet became almost certainly the main channel of

communication about films – mark a revolution in taste, such as happened in 1962? Back then a brand-new film, Antonioni's *L'avventura*, vaulted into second place. If there was going to be an equivalent today, it might have been Malick's *The Tree of Life*, which only polled one vote less than the last title in the top 100. In fact the highest film from the new century is Wong Kar-Wai's *In the Mood for Love*, just 12 years old, now sharing joint 24th slot with Dreyer's venerable *Ordet*.

It's improbable conjunctions like this, I would argue, that make the polling exercise entertaining, even thought-provoking. But does it tell us anything really important? The most striking feature of the 2012 top ten has nothing to do with new films – it's the presence, for the first time, of three silent-era films: *Sunrise: A Song of Two Humans*, *Man with a Movie Camera* and *The Passion of Joan of Arc*. Both the Murnau and the Dreyer are perennial top-ten favourites, but Vertov's city symphony is making its debut, and this at the expense of his old rival Eisenstein, whose *Battleship Potemkin* drops out of the top ten (just) for the first time in 60 years.

By now, you're probably thinking this just



1952 Poll	
1	Bicycle Thieves (<i>De Sica</i>)
2	City Lights (<i>Chaplin</i>)
=	The Gold Rush (<i>Chaplin</i>)
4	Battleship Potemkin (<i>Eisenstein</i>)
5	Intolerance (<i>Griffith</i>)
=	Louisiana Story (<i>Flaherty</i>)
7	Greed (<i>von Stroheim</i>)
=	Le Jour se lève (<i>Carné</i>)
=	The Passion of Joan of Arc (<i>Dreyer</i>)
10	Brief Encounter (<i>Lean</i>)
=	La Règle du jeu (<i>Renoir</i>)

1962 Poll	
1	Citizen Kane (<i>Welles</i>)
2	L'avventura (<i>Antonioni</i>)
3	La Règle du jeu (<i>Renoir</i>)
4	Greed (<i>von Stroheim</i>)
=	Ugetsu monogatari (<i>Mizoguchi</i>)
6	Battleship Potemkin (<i>Eisenstein</i>)
7	Bicycle Thieves (<i>De Sica</i>)
=	Ivan the Terrible (<i>Eisenstein</i>)
9	La terra trema (<i>Visconti</i>)
10	L'Atalante (<i>Vigo</i>)

1972 Poll	
1	Citizen Kane (<i>Welles</i>)
2	La Règle du jeu (<i>Renoir</i>)
3	Battleship Potemkin (<i>Eisenstein</i>)
4	8½ (<i>Fellini</i>)
5	L'avventura (<i>Antonioni</i>)
6	Persona (<i>Bergman</i>)
7	The Passion of Joan of Arc (<i>Dreyer</i>)
8	The General (<i>Keaton & Bruckman</i>)
=	The Magnificent Ambersons (<i>Welles</i>)
10	Ugetsu monogatari (<i>Mizoguchi</i>)
=	Wild Strawberries (<i>Bergman</i>)

1982 Poll	
1	Citizen Kane (<i>Welles</i>)
2	La Règle du jeu (<i>Renoir</i>)
3	Seven Samurai (<i>Kurosawa</i>)
=	Singin' in the Rain (<i>Donen & Kelly</i>)
5	8½ (<i>Fellini</i> , 1963)
6	Battleship Potemkin (<i>Eisenstein</i>)
7	L'avventura (<i>Antonioni</i>)
=	The Magnificent Ambersons (<i>Welles</i>)
=	Vertigo (<i>Hitchcock</i>)
10	The General (<i>Keaton & Bruckman</i>)
=	The Searchers (<i>Ford</i>)

1992 Poll	
1	Citizen Kane (<i>Welles</i>)
2	La Règle du Jeu (<i>Renoir</i>)
3	Tokyo Story (<i>Ozu</i>)
4	Vertigo (<i>Hitchcock</i>)
5	The Searchers (<i>Ford</i>)
6	L'Atalante (<i>Vigo</i>)
=	The Passion of Joan of Arc (<i>Dreyer</i>)
=	Pather Panchali (<i>Ray</i>)
=	Battleship Potemkin (<i>Eisenstein</i>)
10	2001: A Space Odyssey (<i>Kubrick</i>)

2002 Poll	
1	Citizen Kane (<i>Welles</i>)
2	Vertigo (<i>Hitchcock</i>)
3	La Règle du jeu (<i>Renoir</i>)
4	The Godfather and The Godfather Part II (<i>Coppola</i> , counted as one entry)
5	Tokyo Story (<i>Ozu</i>)
6	2001: A Space Odyssey (<i>Kubrick</i>)
7	Battleship Potemkin (<i>Eisenstein</i>)
=	Sunrise: A Song of Two Humans (<i>Murnau</i>)
9	8½ (<i>Fellini</i>)
10	Singin' in the Rain (<i>Donen & Kelly</i>)

What the 'canon' demonstrates, as always, is a slow-moving consensus: people who know and see a lot of films trying to reflect on their scale of values

← shows how arbitrary the whole business is. Another vote for *Potemkin* would have made it joint tenth with Fellini's 8%. True, but the unforeseen rise of *Man with a Movie Camera* confirms a process that's been building for years – like the critical recognition of Hitchcock – and has no doubt been accelerated by the many different kinds of live accompaniment the film will support, from the Alloy Orchestra and Michael Nyman to prog rock. It's also the first time since 1952 that any kind of documentary has made it into the top ten (without getting into arguments about what counts as documentary...).

The new, wider polling base of the list has also produced some real surprises outside the top ten: Lanzmann's 12-hour *Shoah* at no. 29 must surely be thanks to video viewing, likewise Godard's *Histoire(s) du cinéma* at no. 48. Béla Tarr has also made a strong showing, with *Sátántangó* ranking 35 (above the once-canonic *The 400 Blows*, *La dolce vita* and *Journey to Italy*). Another long film, widely considered 'difficult' (and certainly difficult to see, until the appearance of a DVD), now shares the no. 35 slot: Chantal Akerman's *Jeanne Dielman, 23 quai du Commerce 1080 Bruxelles*. This is also the highest-ranked film directed by a woman, with only one other in the top 100, Claire Denis's *Beau Travail* (at no. 78). This disappointing result comes after complaints about a lack of women in this year's Cannes festival selection, and suggests that women's film is indeed losing ground in current critical thinking.

Past polls have been the occasion to reflect on broad



42: PATHER PANCHALI

trends in taste, on who's in and who's out, and also to comment on the persistent Western bias in critical esteem. In this respect, the 2012 poll sees Ozu back to no. 3 (where *Tokyo Story* was in 1992) and also at no. 15 (*Late Spring*), with the other usual Japanese suspects Kurosawa (*Seven Samurai*, *Rashomon*) and Mizoguchi (*Ugetsu monogatari*) now joined by Wong Kar-Wai in the top 50, with Edward Yang (*A Brighter Summer Day*, *A One and a Two*) in the top 100. But the appearance at no. 105 of Fei Mu's *Spring in a Small Town* (1948) may prove significant. Elsewhere in Asia, only Satyajit Ray's *Pather Panchali* (at no. 42) represents India's vast array of filmmaking in the top 100. African cinema is equally invisible, although the appearance of Mambéty's *Touki-Bouki* at joint 93rd (sharing the same number of votes as *Intolerance* and *The Seventh Seal*) must surely owe something to the film's recent high-profile restoration.

What 'the canon' demonstrates, as always, is a slow-moving consensus: people who know and see a lot of films trying to reflect on their scale of values. It's about naming classics, and so will always be biased against the recent, the marginal and the exceptional – apart from those brave enough to flaunt their non-canonic taste. With such a volume of list-making and often combative argument about films now available online – together with unprecedented access to old and obscure titles – it would seem likely that the 'old canon' shaped in the 1960s will eventually be eroded, or superseded by something more eclectic, reflecting recent discoveries.

Certainly, one problem felt by most participants in the poll is simply the ever-expanding number of films. Unlike the guardians of taste in other fields such as literature and art, film connoisseurs have tended not to pigeonhole themselves as specialists in a particular period or region, and so are faced with ever more invidious choices in listing just ten titles. Film, albeit in its predominantly digital forms, is still a global culture, with more exchange across cultural barriers than anything other than pop music and detective fiction.

But within this expanding bubble, it's touching to see how some articles of faith still command respect. Even with no fewer than three films by Coppola in the top 50 (after the 'splitting' of *The Godfather* into separate entries for parts 1 and 2 – hence its dramatic fall since 2002), there's still room for three by Tarkovsky in the same 50. At the very least, the 2012 list should be enough to start some entertaining arguments...

TOP 25 DIRECTORS

	Votes*
1 Alfred Hitchcock	318
2 Jean-Luc Godard	238
3 Orson Welles	231
4 Ozu Yasujiro	189
5 Jean Renoir	179
6 John Ford	158
= Carl Theodor Dreyer	158
8 Stanley Kubrick	157
9 Andrei Tarkovsky	153
10 Robert Bresson	149
11 Francis Ford Coppola	145
12 Ingmar Bergman	143
13 F. W. Murnau	134
14 Federico Fellini	129
15 Kurosawa Akira	127
16 Luis Buñuel	114
17 Michelangelo Antonioni	110
18 Charles Chaplin	98
19 Martin Scorsese	97
20 David Lynch	92
21 Fritz Lang	91
22 Sergei M. Eisenstein	88
23 Mizoguchi Kenji	85
24 Michael Powell & Emeric Pressburger	84
25 Roberto Rossellini	83

* As derived from votes cast in the critics' poll

TOP 10s BY DECADE

Breaking down the 2012 results decade by decade produces surprises. The best film of the 1980s was a 12-hour documentary. In the 1990s, it was a six-and-a-half-hour film from Hungary...

1920s
1 Sunrise (Murnau, 1927)
2 Man with a Movie Camera (Vertov, 1929)
3 The Passion of Joan of Arc (Dreyer, 1927)
4 Battleship Potemkin (Eisenstein, 1925)
5 The General (Keaton & Bruckman, 1926)
6 Metropolis (Lang, 1927)
7 Sherlock Jr. (Keaton, 1924)
8 Greed (von Stroheim, 1925)
9 Un chien andalou (Buñuel, 1928)
10 Nosferatu (Murnau, 1922)

1930s
1 La Règle du jeu (Renoir, 1939)
2 L'Atalante (Vigo, 1934)
3 City Lights (Chaplin, 1931)
4 M (Lang, 1931)
5 Modern Times (Chaplin, 1936)
6 La Grande Illusion (Renoir, 1937)
7 Partie de campagne (Renoir, 1936)
8 L'Age d'or (Buñuel, 1930)
= Bringing up Baby (Hawks, 1938)
10 Trouble in Paradise (Lubitsch, 1932)

1940s
1 Citizen Kane (Welles, 1941)
2 Late Spring (Ozu, 1949)
3 Bicycle Thieves (De Sica, 1948)
4 Les Enfants du paradis (Carné, 1945)
= The Third Man (Reed, 1949)
6 The Magnificent Ambersons (Welles, 1942)
7 Casablanca (Curtiz, 1942)
8 A Matter of Life and Death (Powell & Pressburger, 1946)
9 The Life and Death of Colonel Blimp (Powell & Pressburger, 1943)
10 Meshes of the Afternoon (Deren & Hamid, 1943)
= Ivan the Terrible (Eisenstein, 1945)

1950s
1 Vertigo (Hitchcock, 1958)
2 Tokyo Story (Ozu, 1953)
3 The Searchers (Ford, 1956)
4 Seven Samurai (Kurosawa, 1954)
5 Singin' in the Rain (Donen & Kelly, 1951)
6 Ordet (Dreyer, 1955)
7 Rashomon (Kurosawa, 1950)
8 The 400 Blows (Truffaut, 1959)
9 Journey to Italy (Rossellini, 1954)
10 Pather Panchali (S. Ray, 1955)
= Some Like It Hot (Wilder, 1959)

1960s
1 2001: A Space Odyssey (Kubrick, 1968)
2 8½ (Fellini, 1963)
3 Breathless (Godard, 1960)
4 Au hasard Balthazar (Bresson, 1966)
5 Persona (Bergman, 1966)
6 L'avventura (Antonioni, 1960)
6 Le Mépris (Godard, 1963)
8 Andrei Rublev (Tarkovsky, 1966)
9 Psycho (Hitchcock, 1960)
10 La dolce vita (Fellini, 1960)

1970s
1 Apocalypse Now (Coppola, 1979)
2 Mirror (Tarkovsky, 1974)
3 The Godfather (Coppola, 1972)
4 Stalker (Tarkovsky, 1979)
5 The Godfather Part II (Coppola, 1974)
= Taxi Driver (Scorsese, 1976)
7 Jeanne Dielman, 23 quai du Commerce 1080 Bruxelles (Akerman, 1975)
8 La Maman et la Putain (Eustache, 1973)
= Barry Lyndon (Kubrick, 1975)
10 Nashville (Altman, 1975)

1980s
1 Shoah (Lanzmann, 1985)
2 Raging Bull (Scorsese, 1980)
3 Blade Runner (Scott, 1982)
= Sans soleil (Marker, 1982)
= Blue Velvet (Lynch, 1986)
6 Fanny and Alexander (Bergman, 1984)
7 A City of Sadness (Hou, 1989)
8 L'Argent (Bresson, 1983)
= Do the Right Thing (Lee, 1989)
10 Come and See (Klimov, 1985)
= Distant Voices, Still Lives (Davies, 1988)
= My Neighbour Totoro (Miyazaki, 1988)
= Once upon a Time in America (Leone, 1983)
= The Shining (Kubrick, 1980)

1990s
1 Sátántangó (Tarr, 1994)
2 Close-Up (Kiarostami, 1990)
3 Histoire(s) du cinema (Godard, 1998)
4 Beau Travail (Denis, 1998)
5 A Brighter Summer Day (Yang, 1991)
6 Three Colours Blue (Kieslowski, 1993)
6 Pulp Fiction (Tarantino, 1994)
8 Chungking Express (Wong, 1994)
9 Goodfellas (Scorsese, 1990)
10 Breaking the Waves (von Trier, 1996)
10 The Thin Red Line (Malick, 1998)

Post 2000
1 In the Mood for Love (Wong, 2000)
2 Mulholland Dr. (Lynch, 2001)
3 A One and a Two (Yang, 2000)
4 The Tree of Life (Malick, 2010)
5 Tropical Malady (Weerasethakul, 2004)
6 Hidden (Haneke, 2004)
7 Werckmeister Harmonies (Tarr, 2000)
8 West of the Tracks (Wang, 2003)
= The Turin Horse (Tarr, 2011)
= The Death of Mr Lazarescu (Puiu, 2005)
= Wall-E (Stanton, 2008)
= Uncle Boonmee Who Can Recall His Past Lives (Weerasethakul, 2010)
= Russian Ark (Sokurov, 2002)
= Spirited Away (Miyazaki, 2001)
= There Will Be Blood (Anderson, 2007)

35: JEANNE DIELMAN



NATIONAL AND GENRE TOP 10s

Breaking down the results of the 2012 critics' poll in terms of countries, genres – and gender

British Films*

- 1 The Third Man
- 2 Lawrence of Arabia
- 3 A Matter of Life and Death
- 4 The Life and Death of Colonel Blimp
- 5 Performance
- 6 A Canterbury Tale
- = The Red Shoes
- 8 Don't Look Now
- 9 Black Narcissus
- = Brief Encounter
- = Distant Voices, Still Lives

*British productions (or co-productions) by British-born directors

American Films

- 1 Vertigo
- 2 Citizen Kane
- 3 Sunrise: A Song of Two Humans
- 4 2001: A Space Odyssey
- 5 The Searchers
- 6 Apocalypse Now
- 7 Singin' in the Rain
- 8 The Godfather
- 9 Mulholland Dr.
- 10 The Godfather Part II
- = Taxi Driver

French Films

- 1 La Règle du jeu
- 2 The Passion of Joan of Arc
- 3 L'Atalante
- 4 Breathless
- 5 Au hasard Balthazar
- 6 Le Mépris
- 7 Shoah
- 8 The 400 Blows
- 9 Pierrot le fou
- = Play Time

German Films

- 1 Metropolis
- 2 M
- 3 Aguirre, Wrath of God
- 4 Fear Eats the Soul
- 5 Nosferatu
- 6 The Last Laugh
- 7 Kings of the Road
- = Berlin Alexanderplatz
- 9 The Cabinet of Dr Caligari
- = Pandora's Box

Russian and Soviet

- 1 Man with a Movie Camera
- 2 Battleship Potemkin
- 3 Mirror
- 4 Andrei Rublev
- 5 Stalker
- 6 The Colour of Pomegranates
- 7 Ivan the Terrible
- 8 Come and See
- = Solaris
- 10 Earth

Japanese Films

- 1 Tokyo Story
- 2 Late Spring
- 3 Seven Samurai
- 4 Rashomon
- 5 Ugetsu monogatari
- 6 Sansho dayu
- 7 Ikiru
- 8 My Neighbour Totoro
- 9 I Was Born, But...
- = The Story of the Last Chrysanthemums

Italian Films

- 1 8½
- 2 L'avventura
- 3 Bicycle Thieves
- 4 La dolce vita
- 5 Journey to Italy
- 6 The Leopard
- 7 Leclisse
- 8 The Conformist
- 9 Amarcord
- 10 Rome Open City

Silent Films

- 1 Sunrise: A Song of Two Humans
- 2 Man with a Movie Camera
- 3 The Passion of Joan of Arc
- 4 Battleship Potemkin
- 5 The General
- 6 Metropolis
- 7 City Lights
- 8 Sherlock Jr.
- 9 Greed
- 10 Un chien andalou
- = Intolerance

Documentaries

- 1 Man with a Movie Camera
- 2 Shoah
- 3 Histoire(s) du cinéma
- 4 Listen to Britain
- 5 West of the Tracks
- 6 The Thin Blue Line
- 7 Night and Fog
- 8 Don't Look Back
- = Land Without Bread
- = The Sorrow and the Pity

Films directed by women

- 1 Jeanne Dielman, 23 quai du Commerce 1080 Bruxelles (*Chantal Akerman*)
- 2 Beau Travail (*Claire Denis*)
- 3 Meshes of the Afternoon (*Maya Deren, co-director*)
- 4 Cleo from 5 to 7 (*Agnès Varda*)
- = Daisies (*Vera Chytilová*)
- = Wanda (*Barbara Loden*)
- 7 The House Is Black (*Forough Farrokhzad*)
- = The Piano (*Jane Campion*)
- = Sicilia! (*Daniele Huillet, co-director*)
- 10 India Song (*Marguerite Duras*)

Westerns

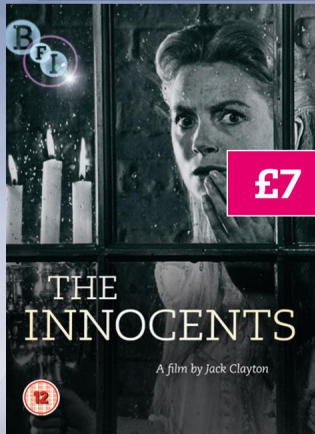
- 1 The Searchers
- 2 Rio Bravo
- 3 Once upon a Time in the West
- 4 The Wild Bunch
- 5 The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance
- 6 My Darling Clementine
- = Red River
- 8 The Good, the Bad and the Ugly
- = Johnny Guitar
- = Wagon Master



ONCE UPON A TIME IN THE WEST



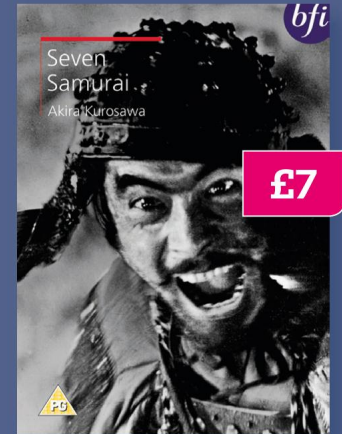
GREAT FILMS GREAT PRICES



DVD



DVD



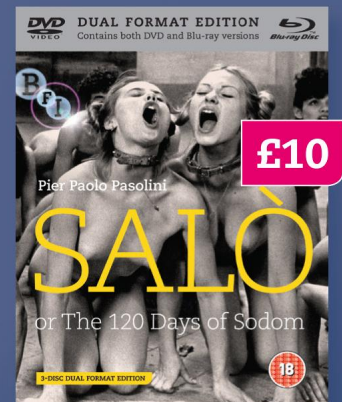
DVD



2 DVD



DUAL FORMAT EDITION



DUAL FORMAT EDITION



DUAL FORMAT EDITION



DUAL FORMAT EDITION



DUAL FORMAT EDITION

bfi.org.uk

Titles and prices subject to availability, while stocks last

Available at **hmv**
hmv.com

DIRECTORS' POLL

By James Bell

In these celebrity-centred times, it's a refreshing anomaly that our poll of directors' top ten greatest films of all time is secondary to the critics' poll. But since the critics' poll has been going since 1952, and the directors' only since 1992, it's the former that has the gravitas.

But the directors' choices this time have created their own startling surprise. Not only has *Citizen Kane* not won, it hasn't even come a clear second, while the critics' favourite, *Vertigo*, isn't even in the top six. The winner, Ozu's magisterial *Tokyo Story*, is of course a mainstay in these lists, and yet it's intriguing that it should top the directors' poll, for the formal aesthetic of Ozu's

films is so singular, so patient and precise, that his direct influence on the films of other directors is not always obviously apparent. And yet the triumph of *Tokyo Story* (along with the presence of *Bicycle Thieves* at no. 10) is a recognition of the fact that sometimes the most powerful films seem at first to be the simplest – and that an unforgettably framed image of an ageing married couple sitting contemplatively on a seafront can say more than a thousand lines of dialogue.

It's striking also that where the critics' top ten features three films from the silent era, and nothing later than the 1960s, the earliest film on the directors' list is *Citizen Kane* (1941). The directors have chosen four films from the 1970s, including two mid-decade films making their first appearance in the top ten: Tarkovsky's poetic and intimate *Mirror* and Scorsese's *Taxi Driver*, which interestingly replaces *Raging Bull*, a fixture in the directors' top ten in both 1992 and 2002.

The appearance of such boldly defiant, bravura technical accomplishments as 2001, *Apocalypse Now*, *Citizen Kane* and *The Godfather* might be expected, for each stands as magnificent proof that boundless ambition need not equal folly. The legendary stories of their production are a reminder to anyone picking up a camera that after the blood, sweat and tears of creation – a process best captured, of course, by Fellini in *8½* – there just might come a triumph.



IF YOU SIT BY THE OCEAN LONG ENOUGH: 'TOKYO STORY'

Top ten films		
	Film Title	Votes
1	Tokyo Story (Ozu Yasujiro)	48
2	2001: A Space Odyssey (Stanley Kubrick)	42
=	Citizen Kane (Orson Welles)	42
4	8½ (Federico Fellini)	40
5	Taxi Driver (Martin Scorsese)	34
6	Apocalypse Now (Francis Ford Coppola)	33
7	The Godfather (Francis Ford Coppola)	31
=	Vertigo (Alfred Hitchcock)	31
9	Mirror (Andrei Tarkovsky)	30
10	Bicycle Thieves (Vittorio De Sica)	29

Top ten directors*		
		Votes
1	Federico Fellini	98
2	Stanley Kubrick	95
3	Ingmar Bergman	82
=	Francis Ford Coppola	82
5	Andrei Tarkovsky	81
6	Jean-Luc Godard	80
7	Martin Scorsese	75
8	Alfred Hitchcock	72
9	Kurosawa Akira	71
10	Orson Welles	68

* As derived from votes cast in the directors' poll

Please note: the 100 sample entries below represent just a few edited highlights of the 358 voting entries we received for the 2012 Directors' Poll. The full versions of all entries will be posted online on 22 August

NEWTON ADUAKA

Nigeria, 'Ezra'

Yeelen (Cissé)

The Spirit of the Beehive (Erice)

Underground (Kusturica)

Aguirre, Wrath of God (Herzog)

Memories of Underdevelopment

(Gutiérrez Alea)

The Pawnbroker (Lumet)

Apocalypse Now (Coppola)

A Short Film About

Killing (Kieslowski)

Saraband (Bergman)

Killer of Sheep (Burnett)

Here, I have tried to stray slightly away from received wisdom.

I am not normally an orderly person, but I have tried to put the list in some sort of order. The reasons for my choices are firstly emotional, as the most profound encounters I have had with cinema have been in that arena.

This list should not be viewed as reductive; each film is a gateway.

WOODY ALLEN

US, 'Annie Hall', 'Manhattan'

Bicycle Thieves (De Sica)

The Seventh Seal (Bergman)

Citizen Kane (Welles)

Amarcord (Fellini)

8½ (Fellini)

The 400 Blows (Truffaut)

Rashomon (Kurosawa)

La Grande Illusion (Renoir)

The Discreet Charm of the

Bourgeoisie (Buñuel)

Paths of Glory (Kubrick)

LISANDRO ALONSO

Argentina, 'La libertad', 'Liverpool'

Le Havre (Kaurismäki)

Tropical Malady (Weerasethakul)

The River (Tsai)

Alphaville (Godard)

Pickpocket (Bresson)

Stalker (Tarkovsky)

The Killing of a Chinese

Bookie (Cassavetes)

Modern Life (Depardon)

Aguirre, Wrath of God (Herzog)

Silent Light (Reygadas)

And many, many others. But

I feel good with this list.

THOM ANDERSEN

US, 'Los Angeles Plays Itself'

God's Step Children (Micheaux)

High and Low (Kurosawa)

The Hour of the Furnaces

(Solanas & Getino)

Kiss Me Deadly (Aldrich)

My Darling Clementine (Ford)

Nicht versöhnt (Straub/Huillet)

Perceval le Gallois (Rohmer)

Pickpocket (Bresson)

The Puppetmaster (Hou)

Tokyo Story (Ozu)

ROY ANDERSSON

Sweden, 'Songs from the Second Floor'

Bicycle Thieves (De Sica)

Viridiana (Buñuel)

Hiroshima mon amour (Resnais)
Intolerance (Griffith)
Rashomon (Kurosawa)
Amarcord (Fellini)
Barry Lyndon (Kubrick)
Ashes and Diamonds (Wajda)
Andrei Rublev (Tarkovsky)
The Battle of Algiers (Pontecorvo)
 This is my list of films that I consider the best in film history. I hesitated a little about what word I should use: the best films or the most important films? I decided to call them the best films. Only the first three films are placed in order of preference. The others are a mixture without preference. My absolute favourite is *Bicycle Thieves*, the most humanistic and political film in history. *Viridiana* is the most intelligent and *Hiroshima mon amour* is the most poetic. All the ten films are excellent and fascinating artistic expressions about what I would call mankind's both raw and delightful existence. These movies make us wiser.

AOYAMA SHINJI

Japan, 'Eureka'
Faust (Murnau)
The Sun Shines Bright (Ford)
The Story of the Last Chrysanthemums (Mizoguchi)
Boudou Saved from Drowning (Renoir)
Touchez pas au grisbi (Becker)
Confidential Report (Welles)
Johnny Guitar (N. Ray)
The Killer Elite (Peckinpah)
Hail Mary/Je vous salue, Marie (Godard)
Love Streams (Cassavetes)
 I always want to remember that movies are made out of the joy of the replica. The fascination of movies is not their realism, but how to enjoy the 'real'. In that sense, I always have *Faust* in my mind as I face a movie, make a movie, and talk about a movie. My favourite Ford movie changes every day, and I'm choosing *The Sun Shines Bright* today. It's probably because I want to hear Stepin Fetchit's voice. I could choose Ford's works for all ten movies on this list, but I must refrain from such a childish act. When I saw *The Story of the Last Chrysanthemums* for the first time, I wondered if it was OK for a person over 40 years old to cry that much in front of people! I choose this movie out of many masterpieces of Mizoguchi, to pay for my guilt. I need Renoir's sense of humour in order to overcome the challenge that I face now. That's why I choose *Boudou* today.

MICHAEL APTED

UK, 'The World Is Not Enough', '56 Up'
Citizen Kane (Welles)
8½ (Fellini)
2001: A Space Odyssey (Kubrick)
The Battle of Algiers (Pontecorvo)
Some Like It Hot (Wilder)
Breathless (Godard)
The Hustler (Rossen)
The Seventh Seal (Bergman)
Kes (Loach)
Night and Fog (Resnais)
 I wanted to cover different genres. My list reflects films that

I considered groundbreaking and that had a powerful influence on my own work. Number 11 would be *Nashville* (Robert Altman).

OLIVIER ASSAYAS

France, 'Summer Hours', 'Carlos'
 In no particular order, of course:
Mirror (Tarkovsky)
2001: A Space Odyssey (Kubrick)
The Tree of Life (Malick)
Van Gogh (Pialat)
A Man Escaped (Bresson)
La Règle du jeu (Renoir)
The Gospel According to St Matthew (Pasolini)
Ludwig (Visconti)
Napoleon (Gance)
Play Time (Tati)
 I suppose that with my back to the wall, I had to come up with an approach, type it and not even dare to go through it again. Where are the Asian films? Hitchcock? Lang? Murnau? Ford? Experimental cinema? Truffaut, Godard, Eustache, Rohmer, some of my favourite directors ever... Well, I click and send it, as meaningless as it may be.

KUTLUG ATAMAN

Turkey, 'Lola + Bilidikid', '2 Girls'
Battleship Potemkin (Eisenstein)
Pather Panchali (S. Ray)
The Battle of Algiers (Pontecorvo)
L'avventura (Antonioni)
Solaris (Tarkovsky)
The Passion of Joan of Arc (Dreyer)
The Swimmer (Perry)
Melancholia (von Trier)
The 400 Blows (Truffaut)
Breathless (Godard)
Battleship Potemkin was very influential both on my art and film careers. I learned a lot from it, and still watch it with great pleasure. *Pather Panchali* taught me that film was not just about politics, but politics could be more effective without politics, so to speak – by talking realistically and simply about human nature and human society. *The Battle of Algiers* for me is the combination of *Battleship Potemkin* and *Pather Panchali*. It's not simply political. It has a documentary feel to it, which makes it convincing and strong. *L'avventura* marks the point I crossed in my adolescence when my understanding of cinema transformed from social issues to more personal and existential ones. Among the films I saw recently, *Melancholia* marked me the most. I love stories that tell a story without directly telling it. To me, it talks about the nature of melancholia in a very indirect way, so that the story becomes completely something else, almost to the point of breaking away from the original starting-point. It simply becomes pure cinema.

RICHARD AYOADE

UK, 'Submarine'
Persona (Bergman)
Le Mépris (Godard)
Raging Bull (Scorsese)
Ordet (Dreyer)



The best films or the most important films? My absolute favourite is 'Bicycle Thieves', the most humanistic and political film in history

Roy Andersson

Barry Lyndon (Kubrick)
Crimes and Misdemeanors (Allen)
The Apartment (Wilder)
Tokyo Story (Ozu)
Make Way for Tomorrow (McCarey)
Badlands (Malick)

BONG JOON-HO

South Korea, 'The Host', 'Mother'
 Ten films that have had the biggest impact on my own personal view of cinema:
A City of Sadness (Hou)
Cure (Kurosawa K.)
The Housemaid (Kim)
Fargo (Coen)
Psycho (Hitchcock)
Raging Bull (Scorsese)
Touch of Evil (Welles)
Vengeance Is Mine (Imamura)
The Wages of Fear (Clouzot)
Zodiac (Fincher)

KENNETH BRANAGH

UK, 'Henry V', 'Thor'
Manhattan (Allen)
Black Narcissus (Powell & Pressburger)



'Pather Panchali' taught me that film was not just about politics, but could be more effective by talking simply and realistically about human society

Kutlug Ataman

Raging Bull is a masterpiece in every element of execution. Revolutionary in its influence on performance, cinematography and sound. Funny and tragic in its immense visceral impact. *Tootsie* is a superb comedy of deceptive simplicity. It at once parodies, satirises and glorifies art, acting, cinema, TV and modernity at large. Hoffman is magnificent, Murray is sublime, and Jessica Lange's radiance is heart-stopping.

CHARLES BURNETT

US, 'Killer of Sheep'
Bicycle Thieves (De Sica)
The Student of Prague (Galeen)
Emittai (Sembene)
The Shop on Main Street (Kadár & Klos)
The Tree of Wooden Clogs (Olmi)
Seven Samurai (Kurosawa)
Blowup (Antonioni)
Persona (Bergman)
A Tale of the Wind (Ivens)
Decision Before Dawn (Litvak)

NURI BILGE CEYLAN

Turkey, 'Once upon a Time in Anatolia'
Mirror (Tarkovsky)
Andrei Rublev (Tarkovsky)
Tokyo Story (Ozu)
Late Spring (Ozu)
The Searchers (Ford)
Napoleon (Gance)
Tootsie (Pollack)
Manhattan is rhapsodic musically, visually and emotionally. The grim comedy of city lives turned to poetry. Grandly ambitious, funny and heartbreaking. *Black Narcissus* is sinister and erotic. A pioneering triumph of atmosphere and sound. Spiritually grubby – and proud of it. *Au revoir les enfants* is a personal film of exquisite pain. The loss of innocence theme transcends to a requiem for the 20th century. Youthful performances of complete and simple honesty. Welles's feat of imagination in *Citizen Kane* remains dazzling and inspiring. Cinema aspiring to great art, political import – and delivered with unabashed showmanship.

FRANCIS FORD COPPOLA

US, 'The Godfather', 'Apocalypse Now'
Ashes and Diamonds (Wajda)
The Best Years of Our Lives (Wilder)
I Vitelloni (Fellini)
The Bad Sleep Well (Kurosawa)
Yojimbo (Kurosawa)
Singin' in the Rain (Donen & Kelly)
The King of Comedy (Scorsese)
Raging Bull (Scorsese)
The Apartment (Wilder)
Sunrise (Murnau)

JEAN-PIERRE & LUC DARDENNE

Belgium, 'The Son', 'The Kid with a Bike'
 A random list of ten greatest films:
Accattone (Pasolini)
The Big Heat (Lang)
Dodes'ka-den (Kurosawa)
Germany Year Zero (Rossellini)
Loulou (Pialat)
Modern Times (Chaplin)
The Searchers (Ford)
Shoah (Lanzmann)
Aksen chital/Street of Shame (Mizoguchi)
Sunrise: A Song of Two Humans (Murnau)

TERENCE DAVIES

UK, 'Distant Voices, Still Lives'
 In no particular order:
Singin' in the Rain (Donen & Kelly)
The Magnificent Ambersons (Welles)
The Night of the Hunter (Laughton)
Letter from an Unknown Woman (Max Ophüls)
The Searchers (Ford)
Kind Hearts and Coronets (Hamer)



Victim (Dearden)
Great Expectations (Lean)
Young at Heart (G. Douglas)
The Happiest Days of Your Life (Launders)

TACITA DEAN

UK, 'Kodak', 'FILM'

Providence (Resnais)

Jeanne Dielman, 23 quai du Commerce 1080

Bruxelles (Akerman)

Festen (Vinterberg)

Jubilee (Jarman)

A Man Escaped (Bresson)

Le Mépris (Godard)

The Quince Tree Sun (Eric)

Kes (Loach)

Close-Up (Kiarostami)

Blowup (Antonioni)

I always cite *Providence* as my favourite film. It was Alain Resnais's first film in English and has a perfect script by David Mercer. It deals effortlessly with the problems of enacting the fantasies of a writer's imagination. It mixes places and time within single sequences to create an uncanny sense of dislocation, but its brilliance is its leanness – not a single moment of excess. In *Jeanne Dielman* tension is built up over more than three hours through the unbearable monotony and domestic repetition in the daily life of the main character. It's rigorous, sparse and brutal – and taught me a lot about economy of means and observation. *Festen* is the only film I ever went to see again immediately. It was radical in what it proposed with the new medium of digital – how it could change cinema and take it in new directions. *Close-Up* was my first experience of Iranian cinema, and I loved it: the layers of documentary and intervention as well as the insight into Iranian life and the Islamic court system. It recalls for me the Fluxus artist Robert Filliou's premise that art – in this case cinema – "is what makes life more interesting than art".

The scene in the park in *Blowup* is one of the best evocations of the creative impulse in cinema. David Hemmings grabs his camera on a whim and enters the park. It's a moment that's briefly empty of everything, except for the wind in the trees, the desire to make photographs. Within this ecstatic narrative emptiness – and of course, because of it – he finds something in this case, the plot.

ROLF DE HEER

Australia, 'Bad Boy Bubby', 'Ten Canoes'
 In no particular order, and without enough thought, and with no time for further justification:

La Grande Illusion (Renoir)

Dersu Uzala (Kurosawa)

Apocalypse Now (Coppola)

The Stud Farm (Kovács)

1900 (Bertolucci)

The World of Apu (S. Ray)

One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest (Forman)

Samson and Delilah (Thornton)

Slaughterhouse-Five (Hill)

Fearless (Weir)

If cinema is in any way significant, and if its history has significance, then *Sight & Sound* equally has a significance, because its analysis of cinema over the years forms part of that history. It has allowed us to understand, and appreciate, cinema so much the better.

GUILLERMO DEL TORO

Mexico, 'Hellboy', 'Pan's Labyrinth'

Frankenstein (Whale)

Freaks (Browning)

Shadow of a Doubt (Hitchcock)

Greed (von Stroheim)

Modern Times (Chaplin)

La Belle et la Bête (Cocteau)

Goodfellas (Scorsese)

Los olvidados (Buñuel)

Nosferatu (Murnau)

8½ (Fellini)

Frankenstein is a film – and a tale – that touches the very essence of what I am and all that I believe in. Whale's superb eye and tonal command are matched by a Karloff performance that manages to transmit both fragility and power.

Full of iconic moments of pure cinema, pulp horror, canny *noir*, perverse melodrama – *Freaks* is still unclassifiable after many decades. Still sick, twisted, perverse and profoundly human. Pickled in a jar of bile, it contains Browning's view of the world at its purest. *Shadow of the Doubt* is one of the perfect Hitchcocks – the very first true American Gothic he made, and an eerie portrait of the world of the past being transformed by the touch of evil. As quintessentially American as Edward Hopper or Harper Lee.

An exquisite engraving of human perversity, *Greed* is a monumental fable that will continue to influence cinema for decades to come. As modern and brutal today as it was the day it was released. A perfect reflection of the anxiety permeating the passage into the 20th century and the absolute dehumanisation that was to come. *Modern Times* ballet, pantomime and absolute command of the cinematic medium. Chaplin manages to entertain and move the audience. In a sense it is the flipside of Murnau's *Sunrise*. *La Belle et la Bête* is the most perfect cinematic fable ever told. After Méliès, only Cocteau has understood that perfect simplicity is required to tell a fairytale – and that nothing but the power of pure cinema is needed to create awe and wonder.

With *Goodfellas* Scorsese gives birth to the 21st century in one of the most influential films of the last two decades. A movie that can be rewatched endlessly and remain fresh and surprising.

I am certain that my favourite Buñuel is the Mexican-period Buñuel and of all his films, *Los olvidados* and *El shine* the brightest. His surreal, anarchist spirit cuts the deepest when used against a conventional genre or a commercial constraint. This example of



'Black Narcissus' is sinister and erotic. A pioneering triumph of atmosphere and sound. Spiritually grubby – and proud of it

Kenneth Branagh

the golden era of Mexican cinema packs a punch, never flinching in depicting innocence suffocated by rules and concrete buildings. Ruthless Dickens as regurgitated by an atheist.

Nosferatu, eine Symphonie des Grauens is a symphony of fear indeed – and a symphony of perfect visual storytelling. The hypnotic nature of the film engrosses the audience into a trance. Along with Dreyer's *Vampyr*, it's one of the two pillars for every vampiric film ever made. Whereas Dreyer concerns himself with the spiritual, Murnau's film has a tangible, physical component of corruption that makes evil immediate and real.

A true classic has to be both intimate and universal. To speak about cinema through cinema requires a voice unwavering in its passion and purity. *8½* speaks as much about life as it does about art – and it makes certain to connect both. A portrait of the teller and his craft – a lustful, sweaty, gluttonous poem to cinema.



I always cite 'Providence' as my favourite film. It deals effortlessly with the problems of enacting the fantasies of a writer's imagination

Tacita Dean

ANDREW DOMINIK

Australia, 'Chopper', 'The Assassination of Jesse James by the Coward Robert Ford'

In no particular order:

Raging Bull (Scorsese)

Barry Lyndon (Kubrick)

Apocalypse Now (Coppola)

Sunset Blvd. (Wilder)

The Night of the Hunter (Laughton)

Marnie (Hitchcock)

The Tenant (Polanski)

Mulholland Dr. (Lynch)

Badlands (Malick)

Blue Velvet (Lynch)

SEAN DURKIN

US, 'Martha Marcy May Marlene'

The Shining (Kubrick)

Rosemary's Baby (Polanski)

Jaws (Spielberg)

3 Women (Altman)

The Birds (Hitchcock)

The Goonies (R. Donner)

The Piano Teacher (Haneke)

Persona (Bergman)

The Panic in Needle Park (Schatzberg)

The Conformist (Bertolucci)

As hard as it is to just pick ten,

these are the films that have had the greatest long-term effect on me as a filmmaker. Each one at a very specific time in my life has inspired me, shaped my creativity and pushed my idea of what a film can achieve.

ATOM EGOYAN

Canada, 'Exotica', 'The Sweet Hereafter'

The ten most influential films, in alphabetical order, are:

Bicycle Thieves (De Sica)

Breathless (Godard)

8½ (Fellini)

The Godfather (Coppola)

Metropolis (Lang)

The Passion of Joan of Arc (Dreyer)

Persona (Bergman)

Pulp Fiction (Tarantino)

2001: A Space Odyssey (Kubrick)

Vertigo (Hitchcock)

Always painful to not include films that I think should be on this list (*Pather Panchali*, *Last Year in Marienbad*, *Theorem*, *La notte...*), but this is a list of ten films that have had the most dramatic impact on the artform.

ASGHAR FARHADI

Iran, 'A Separation'

Rashomon (Kurosawa)

La strada (Fellini)

The Godfather (Coppola)

Tokyo Story (Ozu)

The Apartment (Wilder)

Three Colors Red (Kieslowski)

Take the Money and Run (Allen)

Scenes from a Marriage (Bergman)

Taxi Driver (Scorsese)

Modern Times (Chaplin)

ABEL FERRARA

US, 'Bad Lieutenant', 'The Addiction'

Only for you and your great magazine:

A Woman Under the Influence (Cassavetes)

Cul-de-sac (Polanski)

The Devils (Russell)

Hawks and Sparrows (Pasolini)

Hour of the Wolf (Bergman)

Lolita (Kubrick)

Los olvidados (Buñuel)

Ran (Kurosawa)

Touch of Evil (Welles)

Zéro de conduite (Vigo)

"You can't make films like the films that made you want to make films," spoke Godard back when most of these films were made and inspired me to try – but why stop at ten? Add ALL the other films of the above directors to the list plus all of the films of Godard, Hawks, Hitchcock, Bertolucci, Scorsese, Michael Snow, Rossellini – and Nicholas Ray, Milos Forman, Joseph Losey, Buster Keaton, Sam Fuller, Stan Brakhage, Woody Allen, Robert Bresson, Sam Peckinpah, David Lynch and and and...

MIKE FIGGIS

UK, 'Internal Affairs', 'Leaving Las Vegas'

Weekend (Godard)

Bonnie and Clyde (Penn)

Persona (Bergman)

That Obscure Object of Desire (Buñuel)

La dolce vita (Fellini)

Deliverance (Boorman)
Festen (Vinterberg)
I Am Curious Yellow (Sjöman)
Opening Night (Cassavetes)
The Woman Next Door (Truffaut)
 I am very aware that I have seen very few films compared to many people I know – the list hasn't changed very much in the last years, but most of these films I have revisited fairly recently. I was curious to see how my taste had perhaps altered and, more importantly, to see how they had weathered with time. I found them more powerful than before. They have all played a big influence on what I have attempted to do myself, so in that sense I would query the title 'greatest films of all time' – there is no such thing, and filmmaking is not a competition. But most of these films have also had a tremendous impact on filmmaking in general.

JOHN GIANVITO

US, 'Vapor Trail' (Clark)
The Age of the Earth/A Idade da Terra (Rocha)
La Commune (Paris, 1871) (Watkins)
Earth (Dovzhenko)
Evolution of a Filipino Family (Diaz)
The House Is Black (Farrokhzad)
Kuhle Wampe (Dudow)
Reason, Debate and a Story/Jukti, Takko Aar Gappo (Ghatak)
Shiranui Sea/Shiranui-kai (Tsuchimoto)
Story of Kindness/Chuyen Tu Te (Tran V.T.)
West Indies, ou Les Nègres marrons de la liberté (Hondo)
 Obviously we know that there is no such thing as the 'ten greatest films', nor could anyone on the planet ever see more than a fraction of all the moving pictures generated to fairly pass judgement. What the game of lists affords is the opportunity to revisit and ruminate on those values one holds dear and to share one's enthusiasms. Restricted to ten choices, these are ten works that for me significantly pierce the murk. Through their individual artistry and unequivocal commitment to the plight of the disadvantaged, disenfranchised and too-often invisible majority of this planet, these films are among those that accomplish what Tarkovsky stated as the ultimate aim of art: "to plough and harrow the soul, rendering it capable of turning to good."

AMOS GITAI

Israel, 'Kadosh, Free Zone'
Le Mépris (Godard)
The Wild Child (Truffaut)
The Misfits (Huston)
Shock Corridor (Fuller)
The Music Room (S. Ray)
Salò or The 120 Days of Sodom (Pasolini)
Germany Year Zero (Rossellini)
The Quiet Man (Ford)
L'Argent (Bresson)
One from the Heart (Coppola)
 I chose ten films among many which innovated the form of

cinema again and again. Each one inspires in its own way a radical way of thinking and looking at our world through this window called a movie. They are all unpredictable, putting the camera where one is not supposed to, and this is the energy that will always renovate arts or cinema – having a critical look. The films are never simply a narrative or simply a story or simply aesthetics and form. They are a composition, and this is what makes them great.

MICHAEL GLAWOGGER

Austria, 'Workingman's Death'
All My Life (Baillie)
Mothlight (Brakhage)
Unsere Afrikareise (Kubelka)
The Age of the Earth/A Idade da Terra (Rocha)
Come and See (Klimov)
In the Mood for Love (Wong)
Fata Morgana (Herzog)
How Yukong Moved the Mountains (Ivens)
iVivan las Antipodas! (Kossakovsky)
Forest of Bliss (Gardner)
 The question about the best films of all time is also a question about you as a filmmaker. How do you define yourself through the films of others? So for one I chose three experimental films, three narrative features and four documentaries, and I wanted all of them to have a poetic quality and a strong visual, rhythmic and almost haptic tone. In these films, the art of cinema is not compromised by simple storytelling, journalism or other alien approaches. These films are true to the art of cinema.

JONATHAN GLAZER

UK, 'Sexy Beast', 'Birth'
Mirror (Tarkovsky)
Au hasard Balthazar (Bresson)
Persona (Bergman)
The Gospel According to St Matthew (Pasolini)
8½ (Fellini)
L'Age d'or (Buñuel)
Rashomon (Kurosawa)
2001: A Space Odyssey (Kubrick)
Berlin Alexanderplatz (Fassbinder)
The Passion of Joan of Arc (Dreyer)

MIGUEL GOMES

Portugal, 'Tabu'
The River (Renoir)
The Night of the Hunter (Laughton)
Tabu (Murnau & Flaherty)
The Wizard of Oz (Fleming)
El (Buñuel)
The Spirit of the Beehive (Erice)
Vertigo (Hitchcock)
Pierrot le fou (Godard)
Meet Me in St. Louis (Minnelli)
Francisca (de Oliveira)
 These aren't in any order. Doing a list of the best films ever is a very absurd task. It took me three minutes to write down this one. Not because it was an obvious choice, but because I thought it was completely arbitrary and didn't take it very seriously. Tomorrow I would certainly choose ten different films – maybe with the exception of *The River*...



'8½' speaks as much about life as it does about art – and it makes certain to connect both. A lustful, sweaty, gluttonous poem to cinema

Guillermo del Toro

ADOOR GOPALAKRISHNAN

India, 'Rat-Trap', 'Man of the Story'
 Not listed in order of preference:
Pather Panchali (S. Ray)
La strada (Fellini)
The 400 Blows (Truffaut)
Andrei Rublev (Tarkovsky)
Tokyo Story (Ozu)
Rashomon (Kurosawa)
Boy (Oshima)
Pickpocket (Bresson)
The Puppetmaster (Hou)
The Round-Up (Jancsó)
 The lyrical realism of *Pather Panchali* encapsulated life lived in a village in India with great artistry and humanity, as never before. It was the first time a complete artist took up cinema as his profession. Indian cinema can be seen in two parts – one before *Pather Panchali* and the other post *Pather Panchali*. *La strada* is a great saga of love and bondage, very raw and real, almost brutal in its portrayal. The images are so strong that they refuse to dim with the passage of time. *Tokyo Story* lets the viewer experience the tensions and demands that modern

life makes on people.

The passage of time has not erased even one iota of freshness and novelty from *Rashomon*. *Boy* is at once a very personal tale and a universally relevant one – of contemporary life lived anywhere in the world of deprived people. *Pickpocket* tells the story of a compulsive thief; because of the way he executes the theft, the audience is slowly conditioned to think that what he does as a thorough professional is not a crime after all.

The Puppetmaster marked the arrival of a master filmmaker well entrenched in the medium of cinema, and a maverick at that. Formally awe-inspiring, *The Round-Up* is a marvellous piece of storytelling executed in a masterly manner. The style has no parallel.

EUGÈNE GREEN

France, 'The Portuguese Nun'
Au hasard Balthazar (Bresson)
The End of Summer (Ozu)
Blowup (Antonioni)
La dolce vita (Fellini)



Ozu Yasujiro's 'Tokyo Story' lets the viewer experience the tensions and demands that modern life makes on people

Adoor Gopalakrishnan

My Night with Maud (Rohmer)
Ugetsu monogatari (Mizoguchi)
Sunrise: A Song of Two Humans (Murnau)
Gertrud (Dreyer)
Shoeshine (De Sica)
O Bobo/The Jester (Morais)
 I find it impossible to make a hierarchical classification of the 'ten best films of all time'. At most what comes to mind is a list of what appear to me the ten most important directors, although even that imposes difficult choices. Once chosen, I can select what I might judge their best or most emblematic film, although no doubt if I had made the choice yesterday, or if I were to make it tomorrow, the film would not, in certain cases, be the same. I have also excluded living artists from my selection – with the special exception of Manoel de Oliveira, who I'm adding as a coda for *Aniki Bobó*.

PAUL GREENGRASS

UK, 'The Bourne Supremacy'
The Battle of Algiers (Pontecorvo)
Battleship Potemkin (Eisenstein)
Z (Costa-Gavras)
Citizen Kane (Welles)
Breathless (Godard)
The War Game (Watkins)
The Gospel According to St Matthew (Pasolini)
Kes (Loach)
Bicycle Thieves (De Sica)
Seven Samurai (Kurosawa)

JOSÉ LUIS GUERÍN

Spain, 'In the City of Sylvia'
A Woman of Paris (Chaplin)
City Lights (Chaplin)
Limelight (Chaplin)
Ordet (Dreyer)
Gertrud (Dreyer)
Tokyo Story (Ozu)
Floating Weeds (Ozu)
My Darling Clementine (Ford)
Letter from an Unknown Woman (Max Ophüls)
La Maman et la Putain (Eustache)
 I find it impossible to be represented by fewer than 20 titles. My list might prove too traditional and not render an accurate picture of my general outlook in relation to cinema. Nevertheless, and due to the lack of time, I will have to disregard any choice strategy and rely on my current emotional memory, since some of my viewings are recent, but others less so.

PATRICIO GUZMÁN

Chile, 'Nostalgia for the Light'
The Hour of the Furnaces (Solanas & Getino)
Shoah (Lanzmann)
The Last Bolshevik (Marker)
Mother Dao (Monnikendam)
L'Affaire Gruninger (Dindo)
Etre et avoir (Philibert)
S21: The Khmer Rouge Killing Machine (Rithy Panh)
Cien niños esperando un tren (Agüero)
Modern Life (Depardon)
Boxing Gym (Wiseman)

MIA HANSEN-LØVE

France, 'Father of My Children'
Napoleon (Gance)





La Maison des bois (Pialat)
La Frontière de l'aube (Garrel)
The Green Ray (Rohmer)
Arabian Nights (Pasolini)
Fanny and Alexander (Bergman)
Millennium Mambo (Hou)
Heat (Mann)
La Maman et la Putain (Eustache)
Eyes Wide Shut (Kubrick)
 It's not a list of the films I think are the greatest, it's just the ten films that counted the most for me in my education.

Quite long and made for TV, *La Maison des bois* is fairly unique for Pialat, but it's hard not to view it as a film in its own right. There's a richness to it that I haven't seen in his other films – except maybe *Van Gogh*. In spite of the tragic subject, there's a joy and a goodness there – something incredibly sunny. What I find great is his ability to tell the story that takes place at a very dark moment in France's history, from a point of view of lightness, of childhood. The film taught me a lot about staging, about filming with children, the importance of allowing the time to take very long shots, following the children and giving them freedom, truly making the camerawork in service of what's happening.

The Green Ray completely blew me away. I love this film in particular because it's a portrait of a woman in her loneliness over the course of a summer – a film of stunning truth. Rohmer's films are chaty, but at the same time the beauty of this film comes from things that happen with silence. There is something to Rohmer's work that isn't given – that's unsaid.

What was stunning about *Millennium Mambo* was that it's the film that most accurately represents life as I lived it at the age of 20. I would be far more willing to say that of this film than of any French film. It happens far away, in a completely different culture, but for the people of my generation who were of that age, no other film captures the atmosphere of those years better – the hedonism and melancholy.

MICHEL HAZANAVICIUS

France, 'The Artist'; OSS 117: Cairo, Nest of Spies'

City Girl (Murnau)
City Lights (Chaplin)
To Be or Not to Be (Lubitsch)
Citizen Kane (Welles)
The Apartment (Wildier)
The Shining (Kubrick)
North by Northwest (Hitchcock)
The Third Man (Reed)
Raging Bull (Scorsese)
Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs (Hand)
Citizen Kane is the foundation, the Bible, the ABC of cinema.

MONTE HELLMAN

US, 'Two-Lane Blacktop'

The Spirit of the Beehive (Erice)
Outcast of the Islands (Reed)
Stavisky (Resnais)
Casablanca (Curtiz)
Le Samourai (Melville)
Goodbye Dragon Inn (Tsai)

House of Flying Daggers (Zhang)
The Asphalt Jungle (Huston)
Storm over Asia (Pudovkin)
Les Enfants du paradis (Carné)
 These are the first ten that came to mind, in the order I remembered them. They are all pictures that have been an important part of my life, and have had a profound influence on me. Another important criterion for me is emotional effect. I find all of these deeply moving.

There are a hundred movies that I'd find some way to bring with me to a desert island. How could I exclude Gene Tierney?

MIKE HODGES

UK, 'Get Carter', 'The Croupier'

Ace in the Hole (Wildier)
Charley Varrick (Siegel)
In a Lonely Place (N. Ray)
Kiss Me Deadly (Aldrich)
Le Samourai (Melville)
Sweet Smell of Success (Mackendrick)
The Asphalt Jungle (Huston)
The Bad Sleep Well (Kurosawa)
The Killing (Kubrick)
The Prowler (Losey)
 I've always admired the cinema of subversion; films that entertain while applying the scalpel to the cancer hidden within the social order. These are just some of the great ones that come to mind. Nowadays, of course, there's little need for the scalpel as rampant greed and corruption are there for all to see.

JOANNA HOGG

UK, 'Unrelated', 'Archipelago'

Beau Travail (Denis)
A Canterbury Tale (Powell & Pressburger)
The Green Ray (Rohmer)
Jeanne Dielman, 23 quai du Commerce 1080
Bruxelles (Akerman)
Midnight (Leisen)
New York, New York (Scorsese)
Portrait of Ga (Tait)
Taipei Story (Yang)
Tokyo Story (Ozu)
Journey to Italy (Rossellini)

AGNIESZKA HOLLAND

Poland, 'Europa Europa', 'In Darkness'

Diamonds of the Night (Nemec)
Barry Lyndon (Kubrick)
Mirror (Tarkovsky)
Hidden (Haneke)
Marketa Lazarová (Vlácil)
La Reine Margot (Chéreau)
Fanny and Alexander (Bergman)
Odd Man Out (Reed)
There Will Be Blood (P.T. Anderson)
Throne of Blood (Kurosawa)
 It's really unjust to quote only ten! Maybe I could add in some way Fellini's 8½ and Schnabel's *The Diving Bell and the Butterfly...*
Diamonds of the Night is

artistically the most powerful film about the Shoah, in my opinion, and probably the most cinematic translation of this nightmare. I watch this film and show it to my crew every time I start to prep a film. The Haneke tells more about modern society than tons of documentaries. *Marketa Lazarová* is, with *Andreï Rublev*, the most creative journey into the past. Watching those two movies,

I have the impression that all this is constantly present. *Throne of Blood* is the best Shakespeare adaptation – and in general the best adaptation of great literature.

HONG SANGSOO

South Korea, 'Woman on the Beach'

Boat Leaving the Port (Lumiere)
Nanook of the North (Flaherty)
Boudou Saved from Drowning (Renoir)
L'Atalante (Vigo)
Young Mr. Lincoln (Ford)
Early Summer (Ozu)
Ordet (Dreyer)
A Man Escaped (Bresson)
Nazarin (Buñuel)
The Green Ray (Rohmer)
 I like remembering these films!

ANN HUI

Hong Kong, 'A Simple Life'

My choice of the ten films I like the most, in order of preference:
The Godfather Part II (Coppola)
Chinatown (Polanski)
Seven Samurai (Kurosawa)
La strada (Fellini)
Floating Clouds (Naruse)
Mirror (Tarkovsky)
A Time to Live and a Time to Die (Hou)
Landscape in the Mist (Angelopoulos)
All About My Mother (Almodóvar)
Nosferatu (Murnau)

MIRANDA JULY

US, 'Me and You and Everyone We Know'

Blind (Wiseman)
Smooth Talk (Chopra)
Vertigo (Hitchcock)
After Life (Kore-eda)
Somewhere in Time (Szwarc)
Cheese (Rotenberg)
Punch Drunk Love (P.T. Anderson)
The Red Balloon (Lamoris)
A Room with a View (Ivory)
Fish Tank (Arnold)
 I'm not a cinephile – my movie collection consists of DVDs that were given to me as gifts and DP reels. So I had to think of a way to approach this that actually reflects my relationship to movies. This is simply a list of the movies I have thought about most often. Some of them I've only seen once, a couple of them I don't think are 'great', one of them took me a week to remember the name of, but that doesn't matter – they made the list purely because they haunt me with the greatest frequency.

ASIF KAPADIA

UK, 'The Warrior', 'Senna'

All have inspired me in one way or another:
Vertigo (Hitchcock)
Raging Bull (Scorsese)
Do the Right Thing (S. Lee)
When We Were Kings (Gast)
Once upon a Time in the West (Leone)
Ugetsu monogatari (Mizoguchi)
The Godfather (Coppola)
Don't Look Now (Roeg)
The Story of Qiu Ju (Zhang)
Cyclo (Tran)

AKI KAURISMÄKI

Finland, 'Le Havre'

L'Atalante (Vigo)
L'Age d'or (Buñuel)

Sunrise: A Song of Two Humans (Murnau)
Tokyo Story (Ozu)
Z (Costa-Gavras)
Boudou Saved from Drowning (Renoir)
Nanook of the North (Flaherty)
Bicycle Thieves (De Sica)
The Gold Rush (Chaplin)
Mon Oncle (Tati)

KORE-EDA HIROKAZU

Japan, 'After Life', 'Still Walking'

Floating Clouds (Naruse)
The Umbrellas of Cherbourg (Demy)
Nights of Cabiria (Fellini)
Landscape in the Mist (Angelopoulos)
Frankenstein (Whale)
A Woman Under the Influence (Cassavetes)
Secret Sunshine (Lee Chang-dong)
Dust in the Wind (Hou)
Kes (Loach)
L'Argent (Bresson)
 Every time I watch *Floating Clouds*, it's never the same. My impressions of the last scene are totally different between my twenties and my forties. The dialogue at the petrol station in the last scene of *The Umbrellas of Cherbourg* is awesome. The smile of Cabiria in the last scene of the Fellini is shocking. *Landscape in the Mist* might be the smallest piece among Angelopoulos's works, but I love it all the more for its smallness.

PETER KOSMINSKY

UK, 'Warriors', 'The Promise'

In no particular order:
The German Sisters (von Trotta)
Casablanca (Curtiz)
Erin Brockovich (Soderbergh)
To Kill a Mockingbird (Mulligan)
Salvador (Stone)
Missing (Costa-Gavras)
The Godfather Part II (Coppola)
Broadcast News (Brooks)
Land and Freedom (Loach)
If.... (Anderson)
The German Sisters, for its brilliant exploration of the nature of German post-Nazi guilt and the choices faced by the radical post-Nazi generation. In *Casablanca* I'm immensely moved by the depiction of Rick, the ultimate mercenary, eventually taking a stand for something in which he truly believes.

ANDREW KÖTTING

UK, 'Gallivant'

Aguirre, Wrath of God (Herzog)
Black Sun (Tarn)
The Moon and the Sledgehammer (Trevelyan)
Raging Bull (Scorsese)
Sans soleil (Marker)
Songs from the Second Floor (Andersson)
Stalker (Tarkovsky)
The Colour of Pomegranates (Parajanov)
Monty Python's Life of Brian (T. Jones)
The Clock (Marclay)
Aguirre for the Great Outdoors, its landscape and its ambition. *Black Sun* for its poetry and startling poignancy. *The Moon*

and the *Sledgehammer* for its viscerality, dysfunctionality and philosophy. *Raging Bull* for the acting, its storytelling and the death of a dear friend. *Sans soleil* for the inspiration, its vision and sheer cerebral vitality. *Songs from the Second Floor* for the bleakness, black humour and its autopsy of the human condition. *Stalker* for the zone into which I had never been, its meditative meanderings and its existentialism. *The Colour of Pomegranates* for the controlled tableaux and its medieval exoticism. *Life of Brian* for the hi-jinks, playfulness and deep undermining of the thing that is religious belief. *The Clock* for its conceptual impeccability, implied narratives and compelling duration.

STANLEY KWAN

Hong Kong, 'Rouge', 'Actress'

Tokyo Story (Ozu)
The Godfather (Coppola)
Raging Bull (Scorsese)
La strada (Fellini)
Death in Venice (Visconti)
The Conformist (Bertolucci)
Landscape in the Mist (Angelopoulos)
The Searchers (Ford)
A Brighter Summer Day (Yang)
In a Year with 13 Moons (Fassbinder)

PABLO LARRAÍN

Chile, 'Tony Manero', 'Post Mortem'

2001: A Space Odyssey (Kubrick)
Rashomon (Kurosawa)
Apocalypse Now (Coppola)
Ordet (Dreyer)
8½ (Fellini)
Vertigo (Hitchcock)
Ivan's Childhood (Tarkovsky)
Vivre sa vie (Godard)
Tokyo Story (Ozu)
Sunset Blvd. (Wildier)

MALCOLM LE GRICE

UK, 'Castle 1', 'Berlin Horse'

Dog Star Man/The Art of Vision (Brakhage)
Wavelength (Snow)
Condition of Illusion (Gidal)
TV (Kren)
Kiss Me Kate (Sidney)
Flaming Creatures (J. Smith)
Roh-Film (Hein & Hein)
Some Like It Hot (Wildier)
2 Minutes 45 Seconds (Raban)
Man with a Movie Camera (Dziga Vertov)

At four hours or so, *The Art of Vision* is the first great innovation in the form of the personal – first-person – subjective cinema. In art history it belongs with Jackson Pollock and the American Abstract Expressionists – though the art establishment has still not caught up with this.

A milestone in the so-called Structuralist cinema, *Wavelength* is a great experience at any level in cinema. After years of viewing, it's still as good as ever.

An austere beautiful work – testing and rewarding – *Condition of Illusion* is the cinema equivalent of Sam Beckett from the film-artist who invented 'Structural Materialism'. *TV* is a wonderful short,





'L'Age d'or' is still the most inspiring, cocky, smart and mischievous film – all expressed in an extinct but somehow modern filmic vocabulary

Guy Maddin



'Avatar' is a brilliant synthesis of mythic tropes, with debts to Lévi-Strauss and Frazier's 'The Golden Bough'. It stones and transports you

Michael Mann



'Millennium Mambo' is the film that most accurately represents life as I lived it at the age of 20 – the hedonism and melancholy

Mia Hansen-Løve



I love 'The Tree of Life' because you can feel that Malick had 200 hours of images, and every scene is really the juice of what he had

Fernando Meirelles

simple work using a structured system of single short sequences. An image puzzle but not a puzzle. An absolutely key work of the European experimental cinema.

Only two Hollywood movies make it into my list. Both escape the standard American combination of violence and sentimentality. In *Kiss Me Kate* the colour is sumptuous – and Shakespeare would have been proud of the language and dialogue! It was originally shot in 3D – sadly I have never seen this version. *Flaming Creatures* is the underground film, a poetic and crazy revolution in lifestyle, gender – and an absolutely essential antidote to the boring history of narrative cinema.

MIKE LEIGH

UK, 'Naked', 'Secrets and Lies'

American Madness (Capra)

Andrei Rublev (Tarkovsky)

I Am Cuba (Kalatozov)

The Emigrants (Troell)

How a Mosquito

Operates (McCay)

Jules et Jim (Truffaut)

Radio Days (Allen)

Songs from the Second

Floor (Andersson)

Tokyo Story (Ozu)

The Tree of Wooden Clogs (Olmi)

RICHARD LESTER

US, 'A Hard Day's Night', 'Superman II'

In no particular order:

The General (Keaton)

Les Vacances de M. Hulot (Tati)

The Godfather (Coppola)

The Charge of the Light

Brigade (Richardson)

Fanny and Alexander (Bergman)

Seven Samurai (Kurosawa)

The Leopard (Visconti)

Barry Lyndon (Kubrick)

Dog Day Afternoon (Lumet)

Lawrence of Arabia (Lean)

KEVIN MACDONALD

UK, 'Touching the Void', 'State of Play'

The Life and Death of Colonel

Blimp (Powell & Pressburger)

The Thin Blue Line (Morris)

Shoah (Lanzmann)

Some Like It Hot (Wilder)

Singin' in the Rain (Donen & Kelly)

The Ascent (Shepitko)

The Magnificent

Ambersons (Welles)

2001: A Space Odyssey (Kubrick)

The Leopard (Visconti)

I vitelloni (Fellini)

These are the films which occur

to me today – but next week the list would probably change. It is a mixture of films which were important to me because of the time I saw them in my own life, films which have been influential on my own work and films which I just enjoyed enormously.

GUY MADDIN

Canada, 'The Saddest Music in the World'

Zéro de conduite (Vigo)

The Unknown (Browning)

Man's Castle (Borzage)

The Tree of Life (Malick)

L'Age d'or (Buñuel)

The Long Goodbye (Altman)

Mulholland Dr. (Lynch)

Letter from an Unknown

Woman (Max Ophüls)

After Life (Kore-eda)

Zvenigora (Dovzhenko)

Joyous, aggressively primitive and

trope-giddy, *Zéro de conduite* is the

best shortcut back to the intensely

wondrous state of childhood –

and therefore the source of all

creation – in the history of cinema.

Tod Browning and forgotten

genius Lon Chaney's perfectly

executed allegory about the

self-castration impulse in all of

us, *The Unknown* is immensely

entertaining, unpredictable

and thoroughly disinhibited –

perhaps the most fearless and

shameless melodrama of all time.

Man's Castle is the best example of

how Frank Borzage slows a film

down to unspool in 'lover's time',

a pace that allows him to pack in

all the tiny details that encrust

and encase a pair of throbbing

hearts. Agonising and cathartic!

The Tree of Life isn't even a

movie, it's a vest of dynamite

that rips open the viewer's

bosom and keeps it suffering

long after detonation.

Is *L'Age d'or* an oneiric essay film?

Still the most inspiring, ragged,

cocky, smart and mischievous

film – all of it expressed in an

extinct but somehow modern

filmic vocabulary. We'll never

quite catch up to this picture.

The Long Goodbye is mannered

in crazy, loosey-goosey ways.

Altman, in the zone, completely

repurposes a genre!

Mulholland Dr.: boom!

Game changed!

Letter from an Unknown Woman:

sadistic comedy or delirious

tragedy? Masterfully both.

Singular use, reuse and re-

reuse of memory and film-as-

memory in *After Life*, Kore-eda's

strangely playful yet moving

wonder. What a structure!

Zvenigora is mind-

bogglingly eccentric!

MICHAEL MANN

US, 'Heat', 'The Insider'

Apocalypse Now (Coppola)

Battleship Potemkin (Eisenstein)

Citizen Kane (Welles)

Avatar (Cameron)

Dr. Strangelove (Kubrick)

Biutiful (González Iñárritu)

My Darling Clementine (Ford)

The Passion of Joan

of Arc (Dreyer)

Raging Bull (Scorsese)

The Wild Bunch (Peckinpah)

Coppola evoked the high-voltage,

dark identity quest, journeying

into overload; the wildness

and nihilism – all captured in

operatic and concrete narrative,

with the highest degree of

difficulty. A masterpiece.

With *Battleship Potemkin*,

Eisenstein not only laid the

theoretical foundation for much

of 20th-century cinematic

narrative in 1924, but made

one of cinema's great classics,

applying dialectics to the collision

of antithetical compositional

elements and meaning. Its

influence in British, Weimar

and American cinema is huge.

Citizen Kane was a watershed: a

life's linear history reassembled

into a novelistic narrative

by investigators querying

its meaning. And done with

Wellesian brio, to a grand scale.

Upon the foundation of an

entirely invented biosystem,

Avatar is a brilliant synthesis of

mythic tropes, with debts to Lévi-

Strauss and Frazier's *The Golden*

Bough. It soars because, simply,

it stones and transports you.

The whole of *Dr. Strangelove*

is a high-energy third act. On

American Cold War policy and

political-military culture, it is

devastatingly more effective

through hilarious ridicule than are

any number of cautionary fables.

The profound struggle through

the lower depths of Barcelona

street life of a human soul,

Biutiful is resplendent with grace,

pathos and love. Pure poetry.

My Darling Clementine is

possibly the finest drama

in the western genre, with a

stunningly subjective Wyatt

Earp (Henry Fonda). It achieves

near-perfection cinematically

in many of its passages via its

blocking, shooting and editing.

Human experience conveyed

purely from the visualisation

of the human face: no one else

has composed and realised

human beings quite like Dreyer

in *The Passion of Joan of Arc*.

Raging Bull immerses us into the

failing and besotted life of LaMotta

and his need for and pursuit

of redemption. The humanity

of the picture is extraordinary,

as is Marty's execution.

The Wild Bunch: no other picture

captures the poignancy of 'the last

of', a *fin de siècle* sense of the West,

of ageing, of the pathos of twilight.

And at number 11: Nakashima

Tetsuya's 2010 *Confessions*

– a Japanese masterpiece.

Frighteningly, formally

rigidly controlled, it's

unheralded high art.

PIA MARAIS

Germany, 'The Unpolished', 'At Ellen's Age'

The Battle of Algiers (Pontecorvo)

Solaris (Tarkovsky)

Dr. Strangelove (Kubrick)

Germany Year Zero (Rossellini)

Love Streams (Cassavetes)

A Bigger Splash (Hazan)

Marnie (Hitchcock)

The River (Renoir)

Le Samourai (Melville)

Z (Costa-Gavras)

Love Streams is one of my

favourites in its comical and

sad depiction of a dysfunctional

family. Recently I watched *Shame*

by Steve McQueen and the

desperation of the brother and

sister, and their inability to master

their turmoil, reminded me in

the best sense of *Love Streams*.

Z is a political thriller and a

great work of art but also satire

to an extent – especially taking

into consideration the scenes

with the thugs employed by the

dictator to cause havoc on the

night that the opposition leader

(Yves Montand) is assassinated.



'Diamonds of the Night' is artistically the most powerful film about the Shoah, and probably the most cinematic translation of this nightmare

Agnieszka Holland

RAYA MARTIN

Philippines, 'Independencia'

In chronological order:

Eruption volcanique à la

Martinique (Méliès)

The Flowers of St

Francis (Rossellini)

I Am Cuba (Kalatozov)

The Texas Chain Saw

Massacre (Hooper)

Mirror (Tarkovsky)

Apocalypse Now (Coppola)

City After Dark/Manila

By Night (Bernal)

Commingle Containers

(Brakhage)

Histoire(s) du cinéma (Godard)

Evolution of a Filipino

Family (Diaz)

These are ways to live: food,

clothing, shelter. Within our

daily preoccupations, films

have gone beyond depicting:

Soviet politics in Cuba, family

psychoanalysis, Asian history.

Rather we have continued living

with it: rediscovering overlooked

movies, shooting a ten-hour film

in the span of a decade, recreating

a war zone for a war movie.

Food, clothing, shelter, cinema.

These are also ways to die.

MARTIN MCDONAGH

Ireland/UK, 'In Bruges'

Badlands (Malick)

Seven Samurai (Kurosawa)

A Matter of Life and Death

(Powell & Pressburger)

Taxi Driver (Scorsese)

The Good, the Bad and

Enter the Void (Noé)
The Tree of Life (Malick)
Goodfellas (Scorsese)
Zabriske Point (Antonioni)
Vidas Secas (Pereira dos Santos)
Iracema (Bodanzky)
Arabian Nights (Pasolini)
Ran (Kurosawa)
Apocalypse Now (Coppola)
The Thin Red Line (Malick)

Each film has a different meaning for me. I have chosen some that are among the most recent films I've seen that have really blown me away, and others that made me decide to direct films instead of being an architect.

The last film that made me think, "Wow, that's a really different thing. Cinema is really starting again," was *Enter the Void*. It's the most amazing piece of storytelling, especially when you understand what's happening and why you've just got one camera position floating over the city. I was really blown away. I also love *The Tree of Life* because you can feel that Malick had 200 hours of images, and every scene is really the juice of what he had. You don't see a writer behind it. You can tell he just started experimenting like a cook with no recipe.

I have two films I was very influenced by: one is *Goodfellas*. The structure of *City of God* is based on this film. I always loved the way Scorsese's able to talk about the world of the mafia, with its different characters and multi-plot stories. The second is *Zabriske Point*. That was when I understood what filmmaking is. It tells three stories and every story uses a different approach, a different way of using the camera, different lenses, different colours – it's like three different films combined. For me it was like a class in film directing.

I love *Arabian Nights* for the structure of the script, and the cast – it's a different pattern of beauty. We're so used to this Western pattern with the blue eyes etc, and Pasolini was able to find really beautiful people of a totally different pattern.

All of Kurosawa's adaptations of Shakespeare are great. This guy really is a master, but I can remember scenes in *Ran*. I put in *Apocalypse Now* because of the tone. I've chosen films that show specific worlds or places or situations, and that is really fantastic. I included *The Thin Red Line* because I guess I'm a fan of Terrence Malick. It's a film that asks us where our impulse to violence comes from. I've watched it three times and every time I'm so touched.

And then two really great Brazilian films. The first is *Vidas Secas*. It's about a family that has to leave the place where they live because there hasn't been rain for a while and they're just crossing a semi-arid zone. And the last one is called *Iracema*. I remember coming out of the cinema after watching this film and thinking, "Maybe I'm not going to be an architect. Maybe I could be a film

director, because I want to make films like that." It's a docudrama, so you don't know if the character is a real person or a character or an actress. I think it changed my life.

SAM MENDES

UK, 'American Beauty', 'Jarhead'
The Godfather Part II (Coppola)
Taxi Driver (Scorsese)
There Will Be Blood (P.T. Anderson)
Blue Velvet (Lynch)
Vertigo (Hitchcock)
Fanny and Alexander (Bergman)
The 400 Blows (Truffaut)
Rosemary's Baby (Polanski)
Citizen Kane (Welles)
Kes (Loach)

JIRÍ MENZEL

Czech Republic, 'Closely Observed Trains'
Partie de campagne (Renoir)
Nights of Cabiria (Fellini)
La strada (Fellini)
Amarcord (Fellini)
The Fireman's Ball (Forman)
A Dog's Life (Chaplin)
Earth (Dovzhenko)
Crimes and Misdemeanors (Allen)
Citizen Kane (Welles)
Divorce Italian Style (Germi)
Partie de campagne was the first film that lighted on my head and showed me how a very good film should look. *The Fireman's Ball* very cleverly, briefly, with humour and friendly cruelty, tells about the character of Czech people. All Chaplin's early films assured me that comedy can say in a grotesque way much more about people's characters than serious films, which after a certain time fade away and become ridiculous. *Earth* shows how beautifully you can narrate by image, in black-and-white, without sound. *Crimes and Misdemeanors* is American Chekhov.

In the same way as many other Italian comedies, *Divorce Italian Style* knows how to look with a smile on different human deficiencies.

LUKAS MOODYSSON

Sweden, 'Together', 'Lilya 4-Ever'
Fanny and Alexander (Bergman)
A Swedish Love Story (Andersson)
Man on the Roof (Widerberg)
Margot at the Wedding (Baumbach)
The Last Picture Show (Bogdanovich)
Mirror (Tarkovsky)
Das Boot (Petersen)
Hotel du Nord (Carné)
4 Months, 3 Weeks & 2 Days (Mungiu)
The Killing of a Chinese Bookie (Cassavetes)
My list is based on personal preferences rather than historical significance. I imagined myself being allowed to watch only ten films for the rest of my life. Or actually, to be completely honest, in such a scenario I would probably switch one or two of the films on the list and get some stupid comedies instead – it's just that I can't decide on which one(s). Or even better (if they counted as films), I would pick some TV series (first of all: *Friends*),

SAMANTHA MORTON

UK, 'The Unloved'
What an impossible task. I have thousands of films yet to see and the ones I've seen have been either by accident or through guidance. The films I've chosen here have changed my life. They've made me feel and see the world differently. In no particular order:
Ladybird Ladybird (Loach)
L'Atalante (Vigo)
The Browning Version (Asquith)
Elephant (Clarke)
Tokyo Story (Ozu)
A Woman Under the Influence (Cassavetes)
Vampyr (Dreyer)
The Night of the Hunter (Laughton)
Saturday Night and Sunday Morning (Reisz)
The Caretaker (C. Donner)

GERARDO NARANJO

Mexico, 'Miss Bala'
L'Atalante (Vigo)
El (Buñuel)
Come and See (Klimov)
Sunrise: A Song of Two Humans (Murnau)
Possession (Zulawski)
Taxi Driver (Scorsese)
The Shining (Kubrick)
Peeping Tom (Powell)
Arrebato (Zulueta)
Beware of a Holy Whore (Fassbinder)

SHIRIN NESHAT

Iran, 'Women Without Men'
La Grande Illusion (Renoir)
Stalker (Tarkovsky)
8½ (Fellini)
The Thin Red Line (Malick)
Eyes Without a Face (Franju)
Close-Up (Kiarostami)
Citizen Kane (Welles)
Melancholia (von Trier)
Breathless (Godard)
Dreams (Kurosawa)
My list simply reflects a combination of films that have had visual force (as I am a visual artist) and films that taught me what cinema at its best can be.

JEFF NICHOLS

US, 'Take Shelter', 'Mud'
Cool Hand Luke (Rosenberg)
Badlands (Malick)
Hud (Ritt)
The Hustler (Rossen)
Lawrence of Arabia (Lean)
Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid (Hill)
Jaws (Spielberg)
North by Northwest (Hitchcock)
Stagecoach (Ford)
Fletch (M. Ritchie)
What I consider to be the 'greatest' film can change on any given day depending on what I need out of a film at the moment I encounter it. That said, the list above includes films that have had a direct impact on me as a storyteller and filmmaker. They've taught me scope, empathy, movement, structure, humour, and humanity more than most films.

GASPAR NOÉ

Argentina/France, 'Irrversible'
2001: A Space Odyssey (Kubrick)
Un chien andalou (Buñuel)



'The Fireman's Ball' very cleverly, briefly, with humour and friendly cruelty, tells us about the character of the Czech people

Jirí Menzel

Scorpio Rising (Anger)
King Kong (Schoedack/Cooper)
Saló or The 120 Days of Sodom (Pasolini)
Eraserhead (Lynch)
Angst (Kargl)
Taxi Driver (Scorsese)
I Am Cuba (Kalatozov)
Love/Amour (Haneke)

Here is the list of films that have had the greatest impact on me or influenced me the most in my life. 2001 is the film I've seen more than any other in my life. My life altered when I discovered it when I was about seven in Buenos Aires. It was my first hallucinogenic experience, my great artistic turning-point and also the moment when my mother finally explained what a foetus was and how I came into the world. Without this film I would never have become a director.

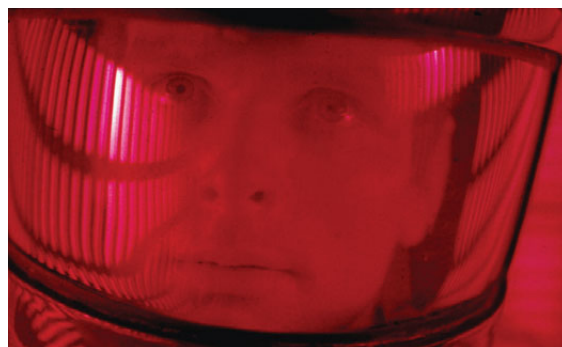
MANOEL DE OLIVEIRA

Portugal, 'Aniki Bôbô', 'Eccentricities of a Blonde-Haired Girl'
Gertrud (Dreyer)
Mouchette (Bresson)
The Passion of Joan of Arc (Dreyer)

The Informer (Ford)
Battleship Potemkin (Eisenstein)
Ivan the Terrible (Eisenstein)
Play Time (Tati)
Ugetsu monogatari (Mizoguchi)
The Gold Rush (Chaplin)
Journey to Italy (Rossellini)
The films I listed were those that arrived in my mind in the first moment. On another occasion, some of them could be replaced by others, but not all.

HORACE OVÉ

Trinidad/UK, 'Pressure'
In no particular order:
Persona (Bergman)
Citizen Kane (Welles)
L'avventura (Antonioni)
Black Girl (Sembene)
Breathless (Godard)
Vertigo (Hitchcock)
Lawrence of Arabia (Lean)
Seven Samurai (Kurosawa)
Pather Panchali (S. Ray)
Viridiana (Buñuel)
Not an easy task! This is a list of ten films that have had the greatest impact on my life in general and as a filmmaker, growing up in Trinidad with the influence of Hollywood



My life altered when I discovered '2001' when I was about seven in Buenos Aires. It was my first hallucinogenic experience

Gaspar Noé

films of the period, as well as French cinema. Then there's the influence of the films I saw as a young man travelling through Europe in the 1960s and 70s, both surrealist and social-realist films – which contain themes and aesthetics that I attempted to include and explore in my own work.

GYÖRGY PÁLFI

Hungary, 'Taxidermia', 'Hukkle'

The Godfather (Coppola)

Brazil (Gilliam)

Modern Times (Chaplin)

Once upon a Time in the West (Leone)

Love/Szerelm (Makk)

Star Wars: Episode V – The Empire Strikes Back (Kershner)

Andrei Rublev (Tarkovsky)

Casablanca (Curtiz)

Jaws (Spielberg)

La dolce vita (Fellini)

PAWEŁ PAWLIKOWSKI

UK/Poland, 'Last Resort'

La ciénaga (Martel)

Mulholland Dr. (Lynch)

Once upon a Time in Anatolia (Ceylan)

The Death of Mr Lazarescu (Puiu)

Vive l'amour (Tsai)

Fargo (Coen)

Fight Club (Fincher)

You, the Living (Andersson)

Breaking the Waves (von Trier)

Rosetta (Dardenne & Dardenne)

Instead of repeating my top ten from 2002, I decided it would be interesting to select my favourites only from films made since 1992, if only to prove the point that original filmmaking didn't just peter out in mid-1970s – that great works could still be made in cinema's period of decline, against the odds. I'm doing this in the safe knowledge that *Citizen Kane*, *Tokyo Story*, *Bicycle Thieves*, *The Godfather* etc will still come top of the poll, and that none of my choices will make the overall top ten.

BABAK PAYAMI

Iran, 'Silence Between Two Thoughts'

Citizen Kane (Welles)

Still Life (Shahid-Saleh)

Battleship Potemkin (Eisenstein)

Wings of Desire (Wenders)

Taxi Driver (Scorsese)

Last Year in Marienbad (Resnais)

White Nights (Visconti)

2001: A Space Odyssey (Kubrick)

8½ (Fellini)

Rashomon (Kurosawa)

CHRIS PETIT

UK, 'Radio On', 'London Orbital'

Abismos de pasión

Wuthering Heights (Buñuel)

Germany Year 90 Nine

Zero (Godard)

Eat the Document (Pennebaker)

Nicht versöhnt (Straub/Huillet)

Report (Conner)

Der Riese (Klier)

The Testament of Dr

Mabuse (Lang)

A Time for Dying (Boetticher)

White of the Eye (Cammell)

La Sortie des usines

Lumière (Lumière)

A list is just a list. A more stringent, anthropological

one might include *Gidget Goes Hawaiian*, *The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie*, *Even Dwarves Started Small* and *The Osterman Weekend*. As it is: pre-cinema, via a surveillance cinema curated by machines, leads to post-cinema. Films from books (rather than of books). Terminal projects. Excess masculinity. Paranoiac masterminds and splitting. Stuff they didn't let you see, or that died of its own accord, in the cul-de-sacs and fault lines; therefore an anti-pantheon.

NICOLAS PHILIBERT

France, 'Être et avoir'

L'Atalante (Vigo)

Bicycle Thieves (De Sica)

Breathless (Godard)

M (Lang)

The Night of the

Hunter (Laughton)

Ordet (Dreyer)

Shoah (Lanzmann)

Sunrise: A Song of Two

Humans (Murnau)

Tokyo Story (Ozu)

Where Is My Friend's

House (Kiarostami)

Both funny and frustrating!

You have to do it quickly.

If not, you go crazy!

PERE PORTABELLA

Spain, 'Cuadecuc vampir'

Ordet (Dreyer)

The Sacrifice (Tarkovsky)

Viridiana (Buñuel)

Steamboat Bill, Jr.

(Keaton & Reiser)

The Turin Horse (Tarr)

Black God, White Devil (Rocha)

Mamma Roma (Pasolini)

Chimes at Midnight (Welles)

Russian Ark (Sokurov)

The Night of the

Hunter (Laughton)

CORNELIU PORUMBOIU

Romania, 'Police, Adjective'

Blissfully Yours (Weerasethakul)

Blowup (Antonioni)

Le Mépris (Godard)

Faces (Cassavetes)

Faits divers (Depardon)

Gertrud (Dreyer)

La Maman et la Putain (Eustache)

My Night with Maud (Rohmer)

Pickpocket (Bresson)

Tokyo Story (Ozu)

All of them influenced my way

of making movies and also

my way of seeing the world.

PEN-EK RATANARUANG

Thailand, 'Invisible Waves', 'Nymph'

8½ (Fellini)

Persona (Bergman)

Manhattan (Allen)

Au hasard Balthazar (Bresson)

Kind Hearts and

Coronets (Hamer)

The Godfather Part II (Coppola)

A Clockwork Orange (Kubrick)

Raging Bull (Scorsese)

A Separation (Farhadi)

Strangers on a Train (Hitchcock)

8½ is a film I saw three times

in a row in the cinema. This is

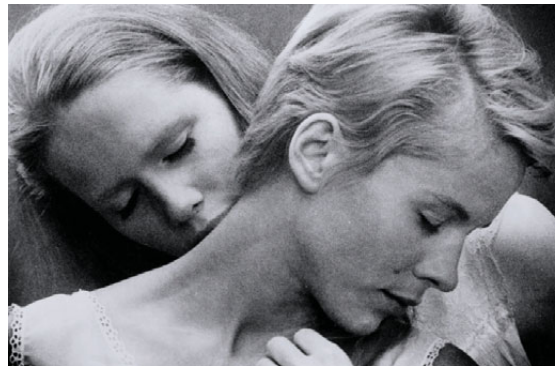
chaos at its most elegant and

intoxicating. You can't take your

eyes off the screen, even if you

don't know where it's heading. A

testament to the power of cinema:



'Persona' is a small film that unfolds like an epic thriller. Every second grips you totally. The two main characters become all of us

Pen-Ek Ratanaruang

you don't quite understand it but you give yourself up to let it take you wherever.

Persona is a small film that unfolds like an epic thriller. Every second grips you totally. The two main characters become all of us. The island where they spend their time becomes a universe. It's very economical in its language, but very powerful.

CARLOS REYGADAS

Mexico, 'Battle in Heaven', 'Silent Light'

Gummo (Korine)

Mother and Son (Sokurov)

Werckmeister Harmonies (Tarr)

Andrei Rublev (Tarkovsky)

Persona (Bergman)

Los olvidados (Buñuel)

Sansho dayu (Mizoguchi)

Distant Voices, Still Lives (Davies)

A Man Escaped (Bresson)

El verdugo (The

Executioner (Berlanga)

MARK ROMANEK

US, 'One Hour Photo', 'Never Let Me Go'

8½ (Fellini)

Andrei Rublev (Tarkovsky)



'Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs' was the first film I saw three times at the cinema as a child. It lit some kind of spark in my storytelling

Jan Troell

DAVID O. RUSSELL

US, 'Three Kings', 'The Fighter'

It's a Wonderful Life (Capra)

Chinatown (Polanski)

Goodfellas (Scorsese)

Vertigo (Hitchcock)

Pulp Fiction (Tarantino)

Raging Bull (Scorsese)

Young Frankenstein (Brooks)

The Discreet Charm of the

Bourgeoisie (Buñuel)

The Godfather (Coppola)

Blue Velvet (Lynch)

Groundhog Day (Ramsis)

WALTER SALLES

Brazil, 'The Motorcycle Diaries'

City Lights (Chaplin)

The Passion of Joan

of Arc (Dreyer)

Andrei Rublev (Tarkovsky)

Wild Strawberries (Bergman)

Pierrot le fou (Godard)

Memories of Underdevelopment

(Gutiérrez Alca)

Vidas Secas (Barren

Lives (dos Santos)

8½ (Fellini)

The Passenger (Antonioni)

Apocalypse Now (Coppola)

Two recent films could be part of this list: *Once upon a Time in Anatolia* (Ceylan) and *Still Life* (Jia).

LONE SCHERFIG

Denmark, 'An Education'

The White Ribbon (Haneke)

Fanny and Alexander (Bergman)

Lust, Caution (A. Lee)

East of Eden (Kazan)

1900 (Bertolucci)

The Apartment (Wildier)

The Wind That Shakes

the Barley (Loach)

Breaking the Waves (von Trier)

Breathless (Godard)

Songs from the Second

Floor (Andersson)

Bicycle Thieves, **Taxi Driver** and

The Godfather belong here as

well, but I'm sure they are on

many of the other lists and will

end up among the ten best.

PAUL SCHRADER

US, 'American Gigolo', 'Mishima'

Tokyo Story (Ozu)

Pickpocket (Bresson)

La Règle du jeu (Renoir)

Citizen Kane (Welles)

The Conformist (Bertolucci)

Vertigo (Hitchcock)

The Lady Eve (Sturges)

Wild Bunch (Peckinpah)

Orphée (Cocteau)

In the Mood for Love (Wong)

MARTIN SCORSESE

US, 'Taxi Driver', 'Raging Bull'

8½ (Fellini)

2001: A Space Odyssey (Kubrick)

Ashes and Diamonds (Wajda)

Citizen Kane (Welles)

The Leopard (Visconti)

Paisà (Rossellini)

The Red Shoes (Powell

& Pressburger)

The River (Renoir)

Salvatore Giuliano (Rosi)

The Searchers (Ford)

Ugetsu monogatari (Mizoguchi)

Vertigo (Hitchcock)

ULRICH SEIDL

Austria, 'Import/Export'

Andrei Rublev (Tarkovsky)

Even Dwarves Started Small (Herzog)
The Silence (Bergman)
Faith Diver (Depardon)
Gertrud (Dreyer)
Husbands (Cassavetes)
The Gospel According to St Matthew (Pasolini)
Mes petites amoureuses (Eustache)
The Merry Widow (von Stroheim)
Viridiana (Buñuel)
 My selection of the ten best films of all time is very personal and based entirely on the films that have most influenced me and my filmmaking. Which films inspired in me fear, admiration and fascination? Which films lastingly formed and disturbed me? Which films stayed with me? Which films continue to mark me? Which films opened up inner and outer worlds, and at the same time showed me paths in filmmaking? All of the above applies to each one of these, my 'greatest' films.

QUENTIN TARANTINO

US, 'Reservoir Dogs', 'Pulp Fiction'
The Good, the Bad and the Ugly (Leone)
Apocalypse Now (Coppola)
The Bad News Bears (M. Ritchie)
Carrie (De Palma)
Dazed and Confused (Linklater)
The Great Escape (J. Sturges)
His Girl Friday (Hawks)
Jaws (Spielberg)
Pretty Maids All in a Row (Vadim)
Rolling Thunder (Flynn)
Sorcerer (Friedkin)
Taxi Driver (Scorsese)

BÉLA TARR

Hungary, 'Sátántangó', 'The Turin Horse'
Man with a Movie Camera (Dziga Vertov)
The Passion of Joan of Arc (Dreyer)
Alexander Nevsky (Eisenstein)
M (Lang)
Au hasard Balthazar (Bresson)
Vivre sa vie (Godard)
Frenzy (Hitchcock)
Tokyo Story (Ozu)
The Round-Up (Jancsó)
Berlin Alexanderplatz (Fassbinder)

PABLO TRAPERO

Argentina, 'Lion's Den', 'Carancho'
Modern Times (Chaplin)
8½ (Fellini)
Viridiana (Buñuel)
The Apartment (Wildier)
Taxi Driver (Scorsese)
A Short Film About Love (Kieslowski)
Aguirre, Wrath of God (Herzog)
The Godfather (Coppola)
The 400 Blows (Truffaut)
Unforgiven (Eastwood)

JAN TROELL

Sweden, 'The Emigrants', 'The New Land'
 In chronological order:
Modern Times (Chaplin)
Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs (Hand)
The Night of the Hunter (Laughton)
Wild Strawberries (Bergman)
Some Like It Hot (Wildier)
The Misfits (Huston)
Jules et Jim (Truffaut)
8½ (Fellini)

Mirror (Tarkovsky) Hugo (Scorsese)

This is a selection from the hundreds of films that have inspired and affected me through the years. These films are for personal reasons especially close to my heart. For example, *Snow White* was the first film I saw three times at the cinema as a child, which was rather exceptional in those days. It lit some kind of spark in my interest for storytelling. And *Hugo*, which is such a loving tribute to the magical media of filmmaking, made me so proud and grateful to be a small part of that world. The films in between have all been inspiring steps along the way and continue to be so every time I revisit them.

TSAI MING-LIANG

Malaysia, 'Goodbye Dragon Inn'

Sunrise: A Song of Two Humans (Murnau)
The Passion of Joan of Arc (Dreyer)
The Only Son/Hitori musuko (Ozu)
Spring in a Small Town (Fei)
The Night of the Hunter (Laughton)
The 400 Blows (Truffaut)
L'eclisse (Antonioni)
Mouchette (Bresson)
Fear Eats the Soul (Fassbinder)
Goodbye Dragon Inn (Tsai)

ANDREI UJICA

Romania, 'The Autobiography of Nicolae Ceausescu'

Barry Lyndon (Kubrick)
Gertrud (Dreyer)
Sunrise: A Song of Two Humans (Murnau)
Man of Aran (Flaherty)
The Story of the Last Chrysanthemums (Mizoguchi)
Andrei Rublev (Tarkovsky)
L'Argent (Bresson)
Wild Strawberries (Bergman)
The Magnificent Ambersons (Welles)
Rear Window (Hitchcock)
 Based on the fundamental intuition that – compared with classic literature – cinematic narrative, governed as it is by duration, cannot go beyond the boundaries reached by the 19th-century novel due to its physical constraints, Kubrick teaches us in *Barry Lyndon* a lesson about the essence of epic film at the highest level possible. An aesthetic and technical accomplishment that lies above any sort of hierarchy.

Gertrud is a movie like a Schumann *Lied* about the romantic idea of love as religion. It's remarkable the way in which Dreyer handles the stylisation of emotion, like an imposing funambulism act, without any safety nets, defying at every step the danger of falling into the abyss of ridicule that looms beneath. The kind of work that marks the ending of one road.

GILLIAN WEARING

UK, 'Self Made'

In no particular order, only as I remember them:
Christine (Clarke)



'Carrie' turns Stephen King's horror of adolescence into a full-blooded teenage pop opera. They didn't need to turn it into a musical – it already was one

Edgar Wright

Jeanne Dielman, 23 quai du Commerce 1080 Bruxelles (Akerman)
Last Year in Marienbad (Resnais)
Empire (Warhol)
Groundhog Day (Ramis)
The Gospel According to St Matthew (Pasolini)
L'avventura (Antonioni)
The Exterminating Angel (Buñuel)
Fear Eats the Soul (Fassbinder)
D'est/From the East (Akerman)
 Alan Clarke is the ultimate filmmaker of walking. Never has walking been as revelatory as in [his 1987 BBC film] *Christine*. *Groundhog Day* is the perfect mix of mainstream and arthouse cinema.

APICHATPONG WEERASETHAKUL

Thailand, 'Syndromes and a Century'

Here are my ten ghosts:
Goodbye Dragon Inn (Tsai)
A Brighter Summer Day (Yang)
Rain (Ivens)
Empire (Warhol)
Valentin de las Sierras (Baillie)
The Conversation (Coppola)



Kubrick teaches us in 'Barry Lyndon' a lesson about the essence of epic film at the highest level possible – it lies above any sort of hierarchy

Andrei Ujica

Many films have married two genres, but none get the recipe as right as John Landis's 1981 passion project *An American Werewolf in London*. That it not only straddles so many tones, but also nails them all, is sheer alchemy. A postmodern classic that continues to roar.

In *Carrie*, Brian De Palma takes Stephen King's horror of adolescence and turns it into a full-blown and full-blooded teenage pop opera. They didn't need to turn it into a musical – it already was one.

Busby Berkeley lifted the musical into the stratosphere with his oft imitated but never equalled set pieces. By taking dance out of the confines of the proscenium arch, he created sequences that are beyond dazzling in their construction. He's only responsible for about 30 minutes of *Dames*, but what a half-hour of geometric heaven it is.

Don't Look Now is the most affecting and shattering horror film ever made. The brutal beauty of its self-fulfilling prophecy is brilliantly constructed by Nicolas Roeg. Its montage has never been bettered.

Duck Soup is a movie that isn't just irreverent about politics, war and economic crisis, but seems infectious flippant about the filmmaking process itself. The Marx Brothers create the anarchic feeling of tearing down the conventions of film as they were still being built.

Raising Arizona is not just structurally perfect, not just brilliantly written, but enormously funny. The Coens took verbose screwball and thick-ear slapstick and married them in high style. Comedy perfection.

A film so vivid, hypnotic and corrosive that it feels forever seared onto your eyeballs, *Taxi Driver* turns a city, a time and a state of mind into a waking nightmare that's somehow both horribly real and utterly dreamlike.

ANDRZEJ ŻULAWSKI

Poland/France, 'Possession'

This is a list of films I would like my 17-year-old son to know:
Sunrise: A Song of Two Humans (Murnau)
The Gold Rush (Chaplin)
Top Hat (Sandrich)
La Grande Illusion (Renoir)
Hamlet (Olivier)
Umberto D. (De Sica)
L'avventura (Antonioni)
2001: A Space Odyssey (Kubrick)
Amarcord (Fellini)
The Wild Bunch (Peckinpah)

ANDREY ZVYAGINTSEV

Russia, 'The Return', 'The Banishment'

Diary of a Country Priest (Bresson)
L'eclisse (Antonioni)
Ordet (Dreyer)
Wild Strawberries (Bergman)
Andrei Rublev (Tarkovsky)
The Child (Dardenne & Dardenne)
Husbands (Cassavetes)
Les Amants (Malle)
Woman of the Dunes (Teshigahara)
Koyaanisqatsi (Reggio)

ARTISTS' FILM & VIDEO

THE TANKS AT TATE MODERN

The Tate's new subterranean exhibition spaces for performance, installation and experimental film offer a chance to redefine the boundaries between artistic forms

By **Sophie Mayer**

"I'd like to think about how cinema will be shown in the 21st century." That – according to Chris Dercon, director of Tate Modern – was the response of South Korean artist Sung Hwan Kim to the invitation to present the first specially commissioned installation to be shown in The Tanks, Tate Modern's new galleries. That the art museum should have become the site for such thinking is both surprising and sound: as film historians such as Giuliana Bruno have argued, our passive position with screen before and projector behind is the anomaly, not the norm in the history of screen spectatorship.

Reflecting the recent wave of site-specific and underground cinema projects such as Secret Cinema and Film London's Screen on the Square, Tate's vision of cinema in the 21st century is one that blurs the lines between

performance and visual art, and between spectatorship and participation. While Turbine Hall commissions by Louise Bourgeois and Carsten Hollers did the same, they made hearts soar by taking advantage of the building's towering height. Yet Bourgeois's spiralling stairs and Holler's slides – like Doris Salcedo's crack in the Turbine Hall floor – also denoted and engaged a desire to descend, to discover what lies beneath. Opening up the tank spaces mirrors the current psychogeographical obsession with 'London under,' palpable in a crop of books about the Tube and sewers that suspect something both rotten and wonderful lurking under the daylight city. As both Dercon and architects Herzog and de Meuron were keen to emphasise, Tate Modern – once Bankside power station – is part of this fascination with industrial spaces lost and found, and the Tanks' undressed concrete has not been embellished, or even lit.

The three Tanks are also 'underground' in terms of the work they will host: the Studzinski Galleries, divided into two rectangular spaces and a small cylindrical space, showcase new acquisitions in film, video and installation. One of the two large cylindrical tanks will

exhibit commissioned installations, and the other a rolling series of live, interdisciplinary events that consider the intertwined history of performance, film and participatory art. In their first incarnation, the Tanks held the oil that drove the turbine. Now that power has shifted from manufacturing to 'creative capital', they hold art that, in its first incarnation sought to challenge the conservative world of museums and galleries, through ephemerality that made it hard to collect, outspoken political content that might upset funders or gallery-goers, and interdisciplinarity that challenged conventional definitions of art.

Film and video have been central to experimental arts culture, not least as media practices in their own right, from Man Ray's *Emak Bakia* to Christian Marclay's enormously popular *The Clock* (which – set your watches – will be installed in the Tanks later this year). They have also played a crucial part in interdisciplinary performance art, both as projections within the live event, and as records of it. When work by filmmaker Barbara Hammer, painter and 'happenings' doyenne Kusama Yayoi and artist Tacita Dean coincided in Tate Modern this February, it was a glimpse



Out of the shadows: Lis Rhodes's 'Light Music' – the viewer automatically becomes a part of the piece

of the complex, interconnected ways in which the museum has incorporated the film, video and digital media that will find a permanent home – and focal point – in the Tanks.

Kim's installation plays on this legacy, including its association with the 'turn on, tune in, drop out' culture of the 1960s happenings scene, whose best-known London incarnation was the Arts Lab, where recumbent viewings of Eisenstein shared space with rock gigs, blurring boundaries between media and artforms, and expanding minds. Navigating low-level screens that half-illuminate an abundance of odd furniture forms scattered around a dark space, the viewer of Kim's work has to slow down, adjusting both sight and pace to a strange world, where flickering lights and Perspex screens suggest the Tanks as fish tank.

Kim's new film *Temper Clay* contrasts his parents' houses: an apartment in one of the famous Hyundai apartment complexes that share an industrial sensibility with the Tate building, and the countryside home to which they planned to retire. "For my father," Kim remarks, "the first house can be called practical, and the second a materialisation of what was once a dream space." Underground, as Sigmund Freud argued, we are in the unconscious. Wandering, self-directed, through a dark, round (cranial?) concrete chamber, the viewer has the sensation of walking through the hemispheres of the artist's mind. If you follow the curved walls of the Tank, it is as if you encounter fragments of Kim's memories and ideas: micro-installations housed within black-painted plywood screens, illuminated by lightbulbs whose beams glitter on silver tinsel, or throw coloured reflections from metallic card, which reframe the nature of cinema as light-writing.

An artistic patchwork

In its careful treatment of domestic space as cinema, Kim's new commission resonates brilliantly with two key historical acquisitions exhibited in the Studzinski Galleries. Suzanne Lacy's *The Crystal Quilt* (1985-87) features a fabric quilt, made by the Minnesota Quilters from a design by Miriam Schapiro; a large screen showing the documentation of *The Crystal Quilt* performance, broadcast by KCTA television in Minnesota; a smaller television screen showing interviews with the women who participated in the project; and a listening chamber where you can hear – but not see – the interviews. The quilt pattern is composed of diamonds, but the "crystal quilt" could also refer to the virtual statewide 'quilt' of televisions tuned into the broadcast. Both the screens and the listening chamber engage the viewer to imagine the unseen, just as the project makes visible the often-unseen lives of older women.

Lacy's project neighbours an installation whose feminist participatory politics are broadly similar, but whose conception of both aesthetics and activism is radically different. The Tate's acquisition of *Light Music* (1975), a key work of British Expanded Cinema, continues the welcome recognition of the artist Lis Rhodes's major contribution to British artists' film and video, following her



Listening in: Suzanne Lacy's 'The Crystal Quilt'

Wandering through a dark, round concrete chamber, the viewer has the sensation of walking through the artist's mind

recent retrospective at the ICA. Shocked by the absence of women composers, Rhodes composed a score as a series of line drawings, which was then filmed by a rostrum camera. In the installation the projector 'shows' the score printed onto the part of the film strip that registers sound; sound and image are simultaneously transposed and fused.

"The concept of cinema has always tended to straighten things out," Rhodes explained. "*Light Music* does not meet this prescription." This statement cannily sums up Expanded Cinema's project to complicate and proliferate forms of cinema. The installation uses two projectors facing each other, showing the film in non-synchronised loops. It's hard to view the piece without becoming part of it, as to engage with the rhythm between the two projections, viewers step into the beams of projected light, casting shadows that both form and disrupt the image track. In its simplicity and clarity, *Light Music* challenges the tweeters whose responses are being streamed onto the wall of the crush bar to grapple with the apparatus and their own role as audience, rather than counting opinion as participation.

At the same time, it confirms our interactive encounter with screens as nothing new. It reminds us that film — both the celluloid material and the experience of cinematic spectatorship — is ephemeral; the Tanks offer us a precious opportunity to engage with the precarious survival of the medium. Reclaiming film's potential as a 'live' and living art — underground in all its senses — the Tanks offer a dream space in which to look backwards, forwards and sideways at film as it enters the 21st century.



A 15-week festival 'The Tanks: Art in Action' runs until October 28: for full details see www.tate.org.uk

NEWS AND EVENTS

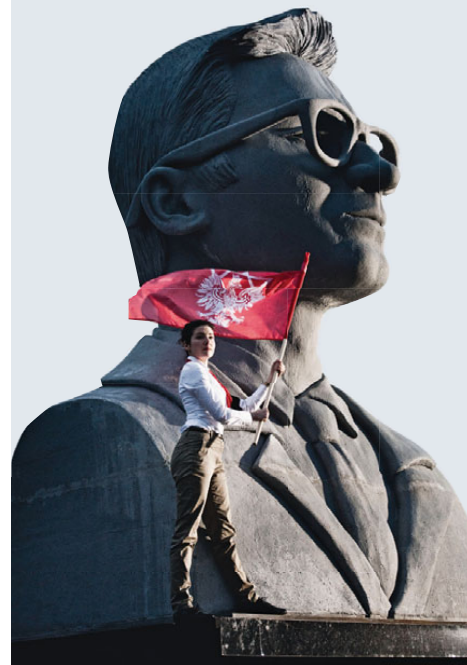
● **Yael Bartana's** film trilogy 'And Europe Will Be Stunned' (below) – an acclaimed Artangel project that screened in London earlier this year – will be showing at Birmingham's Ikon Gallery in September. The Israeli artist's trilogy centres on a political group in Poland, which calls for the return of more than 3 million Jews to the land of their forefathers. www.ikon-gallery.co.uk

● **Kelly Richardson** presents two of her large-scale, hyperreal cinematic installations this summer; one in the Spanish City Dome in Whitley Bay in August, and the other at the Northern Gallery for Contemporary Art in Sunderland until the end of September. www.thepixelpalace.org

● **Dan Graham** is the subject of the latest in Afterall's One Work book series. Filmmaker and theorist Kodwo Eshun plumbs the mysteries of Graham's pioneering early 80s video piece 'Rock My Religion', a wildly ambitious genealogy of rock music and thesis on the origins of America. www.afterall.org

● **The Artists' Film Club** at the ICA shows Moyra Davey's film 'Les Goddesses' on 18-19 August, a personal take on feminist Mary Wollstonecraft, and William E. Jones' long-form documentary 'Is It Really So Strange?', a study of Morrissey fans in LA, on 8-9 September, alongside some of his shorter works. www.ica.org.uk

● **Luke Fowler**, a Turner Prize nominee, presents a new commission at the Hepworth Gallery, Wakefield, running till October. The film focuses on the influential work of three radical socialists – Raymond Williams, Richard Hoggart and E.P. Thompson. www.hepworthwakefield.org



STEPHEN DWOSKIN

The improvised, intimate style of this key experimental filmmaker had a lasting impact on critical theory and definitions of voyeurism in cinema

By Laura Mulvey

In the early 1970s I was in the process of developing the ideas that would eventually emerge as the article 'Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema' when I first came across Stephen Dwoskin's films. After a decade of complete absorption in Hollywood, I had just recently begun not only to see its cinema with the critical eyes of feminism and psychoanalysis but also to be interested in the avant garde. Steve's films opened a completely new perspective for me on cinematic voyeurism and I wanted to incorporate them, particularly *Trixi* (1969), into the article.

Trixi records the way that Steve and his camera react to a young woman who appears naked in front of them – and the way that she, in turn, reacts to them. I was struck by the fact that this overtly 'voyeuristic' film fractured the concept while still exploring its centrality to the cinematic opposition between the male as 'bearer of the look' and the female as its exhibitionist object.

In the first instance, the film explores this opposition in such a way as to reflect on it while enacting it: the camera's look as a look of desire is intensely personalised by Steve's intimate involvement as an equal participant in the erotic drama, losing the distance and detachment that usually defines the voyeuristic position. This shift is realised through the transformation of space. *Trixi* herself commands the space and the time and the rhythm of performance; as she moves about in front of the camera, she seems to become a figuration of mobility itself, in contrast to the camera's enforced stasis, immobilised by Steve's own immobilisation (Dwoskin was a wheelchair-user as a result of childhood polio). This complicates the power relation between camera and spectacle; gradually the actuality of the space is eclipsed through the movement of the zoom, and as *Trixi* moves closer to Steve and the camera, its clarity and focus become blurred. Above all, the inclusion of the camera as a player in the drama suggested to me that there was another form of eroticised look, beyond the ones I had considered until then. I recently read an extract from Steve's autobiography that gives a moving, illuminating account of the making of the film *Trixi* and his relationship with *Trixi* herself (published in *Trafic* no. 81, spring 2012). Steve describes the film as key to the development of his style, and its distillation of spontaneity, improvisation and intimacy on both sides of the camera.

The first draft of 'Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema' included a section on Steve's early films, and I've always wanted to try to reconstruct the argument, which I only approximate here. As the article developed into a highly structured feminist manifesto



Man with a movie camera: Stephen Dwoskin

about Hollywood and psychoanalytic theory, I regretfully left out the 'Dwoskin section' – partly for the sake of symmetry, partly because there's no room for modification or nuance in a polemic. In a certain sense, my argument was soon overtaken by Paul Willemen's much more developed analysis in his essay 'Voyeurism, the Look and Dwoskin' (*Afterimage*, 1976, no. 6), in which he outlined his concept of the fourth look.

I met Steve a few years later, probably in the autumn of 1974 at the first meeting of the Independent Film Makers' Association, which had been organised by Marc Karlin and Simon Hartog and was held in Marc's office at the Berwick Street Collective. Steve and I realised that we were neighbours, living almost opposite each other on Ladbroke Grove. From then on we became close friends, and I often used to drop by after he'd had his 6pm supper (an American habit, he said, that he could never give up) for his evening whisky and Gauloises.

I valued Steve's friendship enormously and it's hard to summon up his wit and generosity, and their contribution to his pleasure in conversation. In the later 1970s we were each making a film at the same time: Peter Wollen

The inclusion of the camera in the drama suggested there was another form of eroticised look beyond the ones I had considered

and I were making *Riddles of the Sphinx*, Steve was making *Central Bazaar*. Steve wanted to use our bathroom for a scene for *Central Bazaar* (that was left out of the final film) and suggested that we use his upstairs filming room as the set for the 'mirror scene' in *Riddles*. This 360-degree pan was the most complex and demanding shot of the film; we dressed the room with mirrors of all kinds, carefully eliminating all reflections of the camera until the moment when it comes clearly into view with the cinematographer, Diane Tammes, filming and turning the mobile head on which the camera is mounted. The shot begins and ends with the heavy red curtains, familiar from so many of Steve's films – and always reminding me of him when I see them in ours.

i Stephen Dwoskin's final film 'Age Is...' will receive its UK premiere at Tate Modern in September

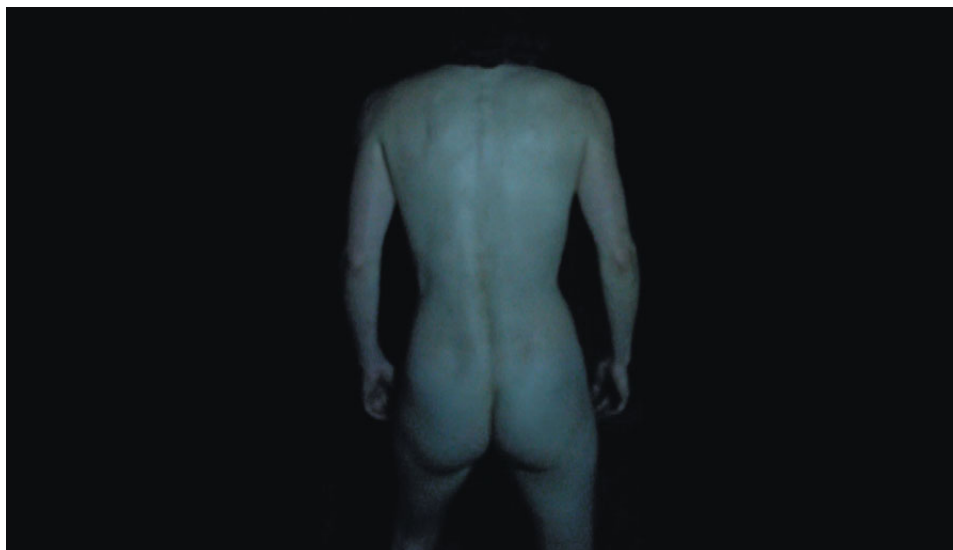


'Central Bazaar'



'Trixi'

FID MARSEILLE



Style over content: 'White Epilepsy'

This longstanding festival is offering some of the most ingenious ideas and thoughtful gestures of any in the crowded calendar

By Gabe Klinger

Now in its 23rd edition, FID Marseille continues to be a rare bird in the film festival landscape. Started as an event centred on non-fiction (FID = Festival International du Documentaire), for the last five years it has blurred that line in an attempt, as the festival itself states, to "make a place for heterogeneities, for the different, for the wealth of multiplicity and for the intelligence of discovery". This year's opening night selection was Miguel Gomes's part-period piece *Tabu*, a film that employs docu-realism as part of its complex fictional approach. (Poetically, the last offering of the 2012 edition was FW. Murnau's 1931 South Seas romance *Tabu*, a template for the later film in tone, style and resourceful use of documentary elements.)

The out-of-the-box thinking doesn't end with the integration of scripted dramas: FID Marseille also proposes that short, medium-length and feature films mingle side by side and compete for the same group of prizes in its two contemporary sections (international and national). The shortest film in the international competition ran 20 minutes while the longest clocked in at just over two hours. Like the broadening of its genre parameters, this move challenges the film market's longstanding notion that audiences don't want to pay to see short and medium-length work. In the age of digital streaming, consumptive paradigms are rapidly changing, and festivals like FID are providing an example by remaining ahead of the curve.

In addition to these unique characteristics, the festival showcases a surprising number of world and international premieres (34 combined across the competition). Rather than handpicking known auteurs from other

premiere events such as Berlin or Cannes, FID director Jean-Pierre Rehm and his programming team bet on largely unknown filmmaking voices from around the globe. Sometimes the results are lacklustre – grumbles were heard particularly from those attending many of the French competition entries – but such is the risk of a gathering that proudly defines itself as a "work in progress".

One of the more distinguished world premieres at FID, Tsai Ming-liang's *No Form* (2012), is a 20-minute tour de force from actor and Tsai doppelganger Lee Kang-sheng, playing a sixth-century Buddhist monk moving at a snail's pace through busy present-day intersections and an ethereal white corridor, set to the tune of Nina Simone's 'Feeling Good'. It's a one-note piece, but a powerful one that is the first fragment in a planned installation. Alas, there was little one could compare to the masterful *mise en scène* of *No Form* (ironic, of course, given its title) in most of the other contemporary entries. Some of the low-budget and largely improvised works featured at FID evidenced a conceptual

In an age of digital streaming, consumptive paradigms are changing and festivals like FID are staying ahead of the curve



'Hasta el sol tiene manchas'

rigour but lacked a satisfying execution.

Such was the case with Julio Hernández Cordón's *Hasta el sol tiene manchas* (*Even the Sun Has Spots*, 2011), a likeable political satire that imagines a fake Guatemalan presidential election on a Brechtian non-stage where actors wear masks and draw on chalkboards *a la* Godard's *La Chinoise ou plutôt à la Chinoise* (1967), probably its closest parallel. Shot through an unsightly piss-yellow filter, it wears out its pamphlet-level depth at just over an hour. On the opposite side of the spectrum, the formalist provocateur Philippe Grandrieux's latest, *White Epilepsy* (2012), is all stylistic pomp and minimal content – four bodies wrestle in slow motion in a pitch-black field, filmed in a vertical 'Scope aspect ratio. To this ardent fan of the director's previous four features, it registered as one of the festival's major disappointments.

Films that merged form and content lucidly, even sometimes brilliantly, were the Swiss *JJA* (Gaëlle Boucand, 2012) and German *Danube Hospital* (Nikolaus Geyrhalt, 2012). In the former, a man with the titular initials wanders mechanically around his Xanadu-like mansion, engaged in a ceaseless, cryptic soliloquy on his business dealings and the house itself. In the latter, Geyrhalt, perhaps best known for the masterful food industry documentary *Our Daily Bread* (2005), films static scenes in several hospital departments, from medical supply distribution facilities and bureaucratic staff meetings to intensive surgery. Both films dig beneath their icy exteriors with a rhythmic precision and methodical insistence on the creepy power of the images themselves to dismantle an illusion of order.

FID Marseille proposes an ideal of cinema rather than a reality of what cinema is, but that doesn't prevent it from offering some of the most ingenious ideas and thoughtful gestures of any film festival in today's crowded calendar. FID is likely the only film event anywhere in the world that is inclusive of local prison communities: its Renaud Victor Prize, chosen by inmates of Marseille's Les Baumettes facility, was bestowed on Claire Doyon's *Pénélope* (2012), about a Parisian mother and daughter who travel to Mongolian Siberia. At the award ceremony, Doyon was visibly moved that her film, narrating a distant voyage to a strange place where the protagonists learn a good deal about themselves, struck a resonant chord with those who can't travel at all.



'No Form'

UNEASY LISTENING

The first of a new column on music and sound in film considers Ennio Morricone's uncanny early-70s film scores for horror maestro Dario Argento

By Frances Morgan

I was a little nervous when asked to talk about 'reading' films at an Edinburgh Film Festival event last year – as a music writer, what could I tell a gathering of film critics, academics and industry people? In the end, I gave a presentation that boiled down to something like: use your ears. Whether you're the kind of person who crate-digs for soundtrack vinyl, subscribes to blogs about location recording and reads essays about the ANS synthesiser used by *Solaris* composer Eduard Artemiev – or a more casual listener – taking a sonic or musical reading of a film you think you know well can unlock a new level of meaning, taking you deeper into its universe.

The effect of an elegantly deployed soundtrack and well-judged sound design is undeniable, but it's often those weirder – and cheaper – meetings of music and image that yield the most interesting results, and appeal most to music fans and musicians. The last half-decade has seen the low-budget horror and thriller soundtrack celebrated by artists imitating – and in some cases sampling – the smoothly brutal electronic themes of John Carpenter and the scores created for 1970s and 80s Italian movies by the band Goblin and Fabio Frizzi. Record labels, meanwhile, have been unearthing and reissuing deluxe editions of soundtracks such as Frizzi's for Lucio Fulci's *The Beyond*. In the cinema, Hélène Cattet and Bruno Forzani's 2009 *giallo* homage *Amer* repurposed Stelvio Cipriani's music for the 1974 crime film *La polizia chiede aiuto*, while last year Nicolas Winding Refn's self-consciously cultish *Drive* nodded to the trend with Carpenter-esque synths and a Riz Ortolani number. This year Peter Strickland's *Berberian Sound Studio* (see review, page 86) goes further, paying tribute not only to the music but to the entire sound-world of the *giallo* genre.

In her book *Off Key*, a study of perceived "aesthetic failures" of sound and vision, Kay Dickinson revisits the Italian nasties of the late 1970s and early 80s, asking if the disco-like throb of their soundtracks, when married to the horrific acts on screen, made films like Dario Argento's *Tenebre* (1982) – in which "the ripping and piercing of flesh is disquietingly matched by high-sheen surface textures" – seem all the more amoral and shocking. A lingering sense of the subversive nature of these mismatches, along with an ongoing revival of vintage synth sounds, has helped fuel the reappraisal of composers like *Tenebre*'s Claudio Simonetti, who reassembled his band Goblin to play sold-out shows in the UK a few years ago. But while it's fun to gorge on blood-splattered electronic arpeggios, my preferred vice is more acoustic but no less uncanny: Argento's early-70s collaborations with Ennio Morricone.



Morricone's music for Argento's 'Four Flies on Grey Velvet' deserves to be more than a cult concern

The maestro's scores for *The Bird with the Crystal Plumage* (1969), *The Cat O'Nine Tails* (1971) and *Four Flies on Grey Velvet* (1971) are unlikely to get an airing at Morricone's live concerts, which remain devoted to his western themes, *The Mission* and other symphonic favourites. But his music for Argento's 'animal' trilogy of classic *gialli* deserves to be more than a cult concern. Unlike the dehumanised electronic soundtracks of Argento's later horrors – or indeed any orchestral score – Morricone's work for Argento generates unease with close-up physicality, suggesting bodies in peril and streets fraught with menace, and colluding with the director's fascination with the visceral. The music for *The Bird with the Crystal Plumage* deploys a sparse palette of voices – gasping, cooing, growling – with descending electric basslines and flute and sax lines that hang tensely in the night-time air. Taut jazz drumming, amplified heartbeats and the peal of a church bell are interspersed with frenetic, glassy chimes that hint at the dangerous, feminine madness at the heart of the film.

As if to accentuate the chaos about to disrupt the chic protagonists' lifestyles, avant-garde sounds – drawn from contemporaneous free jazz, experimental rock and *musique concrète* – drive many of Morricone's *giallo* scores: the stunning soundtrack to Enzo Castellari's *Cold Eyes of Fear* (1972) is performed by experimental composers' collective Gruppo di Improvvisazione di Nuova Consonanza, while

Taking a sonic or musical reading of a film you think you know well can unlock a new level of meaning

Four Flies on Grey Velvet starts with an extended drum solo (although the main character's band goes on to play pedestrian funk-rock).

Morricone's trademark dreamy, cyclical melodies show up briefly in *The Bird with the Crystal Plumage* and in the main theme of *The Cat O'Nine Tails*, 'Ninna Nanna in Blu', which recalls some of the composer's westerns with its Edda dell'orso vocal and simple strummed



'The Cat O'Nine Tails'

guitar and flute. Its melancholy sweetness denotes the innocence of the film's young heroine, but its naming as a lullaby takes on a sinister air amid what is perhaps Morricone's most chilling *giallo* soundtrack, with its feline pace, Ligeti-like clusters of string and voice, and barely-there electric piano.

Despite the revelation of Morricone's experimental music, however, it was the lush twists of his more conventional 'mondo' soundtracks that first grabbed me, via a teenage encounter with the *Mondo Morricone* compilation which contained, among others, the main theme of *Le foto proibite di una signora per bene* (1970) and 'La Lucertola' from Fulci's *A Lizard in a Woman's Skin* (1971). Aside from a few extravagantly gory, trippy Fulci touches, this last is a clunky B movie whose music really is its redeeming feature. Attending a screening of it earlier this year, I spent much of the film hoping for that theme to come around again – and thinking about the power a soundtrack has to breathe life into a generic story. 'La Lucertola' is only superficially 'easy listening': its smooth, sexy bossa nova verse swells into a refrain in which the vocal line leads the listener on a dance around a kind of melodic Escher staircase, dizzying and erotic. It adds an otherness – a kind of shadowy, supernatural power – to the tired trope of dangerous and endangered women that runs through most *giallo* cinema. This subtlety is not seen but heard, the ear more receptive than the eye to ambiguity and mystery. Argento and Fulci's *giallo* women may be crassly drawn, but Morricone's music sympathises with their anxiety, makes audible their unconscious.

Perhaps this mystery is why, after years, I still find this music addictive – although *giallo* fever can sometimes feel like, if not a guilty pleasure, then not exactly the most wholesome use of one's time. YouTube has a lot to answer for, as anyone who's sat through Umberto Lenzi's *Seven Blood-Stained Orchids* (1972) in small, badly rendered segments just to listen to Ortolani's extremely funky soundtrack – or tried to figure out the plot of Sergio Martino's *All the Colors of the Dark* (in which Bruno Nicolai makes a Satanic ritual sound like the best party in town) – will recognise. But it's hard to resist when Morricone's stand-out scores hint that more is still to be discovered – a promise of dark, buried treasure that holds similar excitement for record collectors and cult cinephiles alike.



'Four Flies on Grey Velvet'

PRIMAL SCREEN SILENT CINEMA

By Bryony Dixon

This year is shaping up to be a landmark one for silent film – possibly its best since 1929, when the first-ever Oscars gave multiple statuettes to silents 'Wings', 'Sunrise', and 'Seventh Heaven' and ignored the upstart talkie 'The Jazz Singer'. Unprecedented attention has come from the phenomenal success at this year's award ceremonies of two loving homages to the world of silent film, 'The Artist' and 'Hugo'. It's a good moment to take stock. Will the general cinema audience that flocked to 'The Artist' be willing to make the leap and see their first 'proper' silent film? Will more silent films be made?

To tackle the second question first, it seems improbable that any mainstream filmmaker will make a 'silent' without a particular purpose or angle, although I predict a slew of films mining the silent-film era for settings and stories (there's a Valentino biopic in production, for instance). The hit of this year's Berlin Film Festival, Miguel Gomes's 'Tabu' (see review, page 92) meditates a great deal on the silent adventure/exploration film (it is no coincidence it shares its title with Murnau's 1931 film of paradise found and lost in French Polynesia) and delights in playing with the form, mixing different styles of black-and-white photography while using general sound but no audible dialogue for the section set in Portugal's African colonial past.

'21st-century silents' are otherwise likely to remain the preserve of the artist's film, though established directors such as Guy Maddin and Aki Kaurismäki have produced full-length silent (or at least non-dialogue) features. It's a shame that the phrase 'non-dialogue film' isn't more mellifluous. We ought to use it because the term 'silent film' is inaccurate. The film is only one part of a whole experience whose other component is music, and it's the performance of 'silent films' that's the key to answering the first question: will people go to see more silent films?

As we move ever further from the time when it was only possible to see a film once or twice, we become less welded to the idea of any film having a definitive version. A variety of ways of presenting silent films is not only acceptable but desirable – the modern audience expects it. A quality threshold has in fact been reached in the musical accompaniments to silent film, making the performing art of 'live cinema' more attractive both to audiences and to those who organise and fund such events. And the debate about those musical accompaniments, which has been raging for decades, seems to be reaching a maturity that has everything to do with our increasingly catholic tastes, the availability of digitised material from the past – and a passion for making new combinations of these components.

A great example of how new combinations can succeed was a live cinema show earlier this year by the Dodge Brothers (and Neil Brand) at the British Silent Film Festival in Cambridge. The band's particular speciality – Depression-era Americana – was played



'The Ghost That Never Returns'



'The Artist'

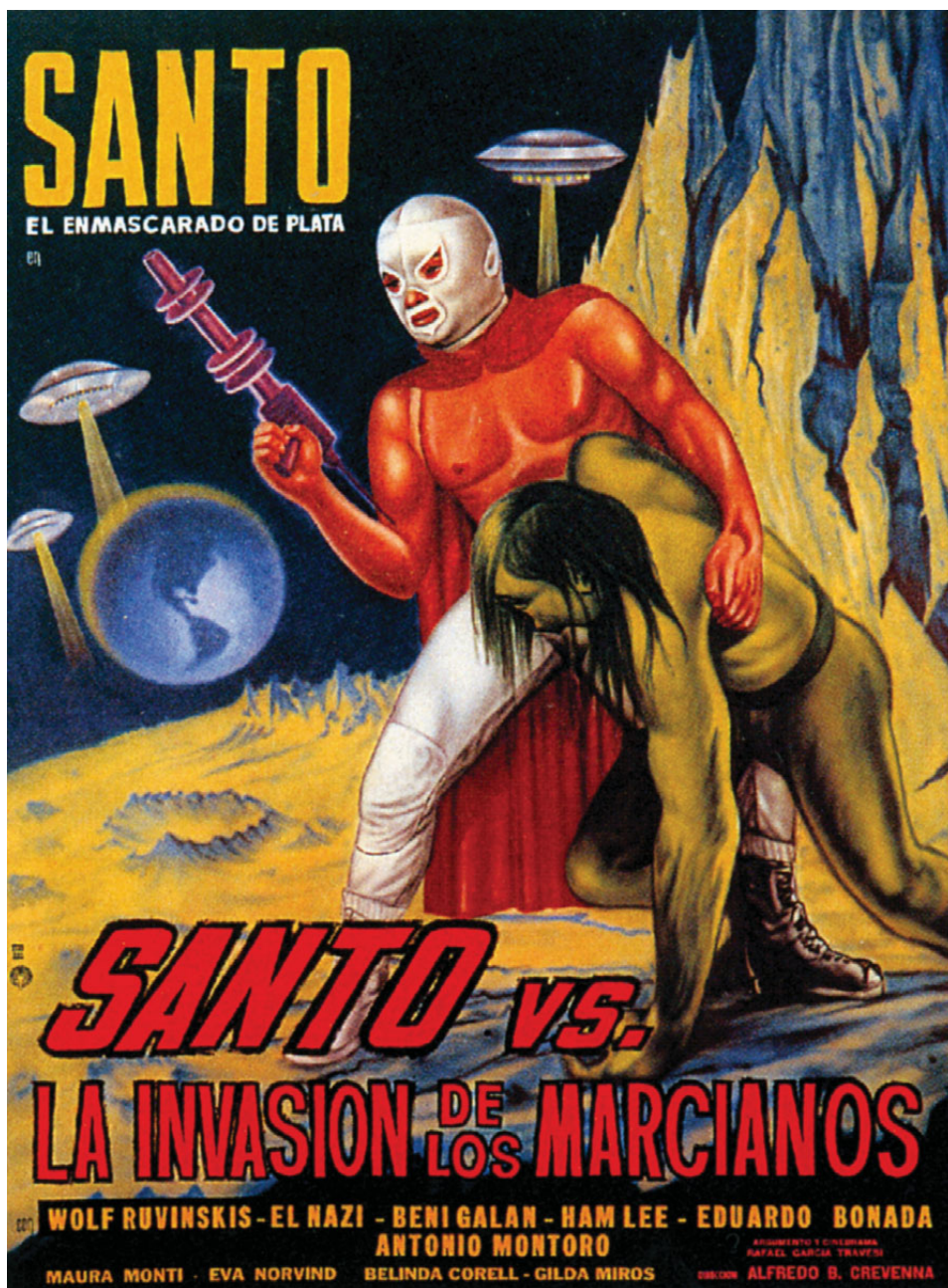
alongside a Soviet silent film, 'The Ghost That Never Returns' (Abram Room, 1929). The story is set in an unnamed South American country where a union agitator, doing life in a terrifying Benthamite prison, is given a day's parole – a privilege granted once every ten years, and from which no inmate has ever returned. In a deadly game of cat and mouse, he crosses a vast plain, pursued by a lone assassin.

Although the film has distinctly Soviet moments, when accompanied by the Dodges' American-working-man's music it plays as a western. The settings of the train, the saloon and the desert help, as do some of the gestures of the actors, which could be straight out of a Sergio Leone movie. The music strikes the right balance of mournful fatalism and angry-as-hell protest that we associate with a whole genre of later films the filmmaker couldn't have imagined in 1929.

There was a time when this introduction of anachronism would have been seen by some as problematic, but opinions have relaxed. There are plenty of other ways of presenting silent films, including recreating original scores, but I defy anyone not to have been completely bowled over by that performance – it was magnificent. Silent cinema – done right – is very, very cool.

So this is an interesting moment for many reasons – the success of 'The Artist' is, of course, the result of a long period of growth in interest in silent film not the cause of it, but the attention it has attracted presents the cultural sector with a golden opportunity to build on. Quality live cinema performances are the key to bringing in new audiences; and with improvements in technology enabling the film archives to do better restorations and make many more films available in new ways, the future is looking extremely bright.

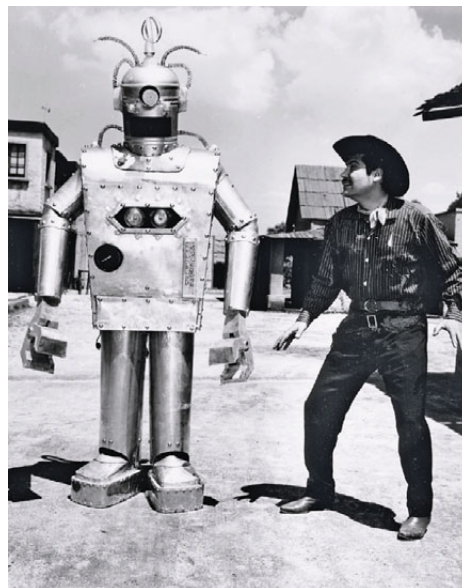
MEXICO VS. OUTER SPACE



Out of this world: 'Santo vs. the Martian Invasion'



'The Planet of the Female Invaders'



'The Ship of Monsters'

The middle decades of the twentieth century saw Mexico churning out a colourful array of pulpy and poetic genre delights – some of the strangest ever made

By Kim Newman

The period from the late 1950s through to the early 1970s was one of mushroom growth for genre cinema in territories all around the world. In Mexico, a long-established film industry looked to American and British models, but gave them a distinctive local spin that produced a proliferation of the strangest films ever made – scrambling 1940s masked-hero serials (transmogrifying Batman, the Green Hornet and other two-fisted types into

Mexican masked wrestlers who fought regular opponents in the ring and monsters in their spare time), 1950s science fiction fantasies (races of *femmes fatales* in sparkly swimwear targeting the Earth to abduct its *muy macho* males for repopulation purposes and lumbering tin robots with flashing lights and clutching claws), the classic *monstruos* of 1940s Universal and 1950s Hammer (a series was built around an Aztec mummy) and legendary Mexican figures such as *la llorona* (a banshee-like spectre) and the mummies of Guanajuato. Full of action – these are films that slow down for the wrestling scenes – and highly melodramatic, with comic-book characterisations to go with the wild leaps of the imagination, these are a scruffy, pulp-poetic eternal delight.

This season merely samples the wealth available. Rogelio A. González's *La nave de los*

monstruos (*The Ship of Monsters*, 1960) offers a space mission involving a robot, a vampire woman, abducted monsters and a Mexican singing cowboy. The man-snatchers return in Alfredo B. Crevenna's *El planeta de las mujeres invasoras* (*The Planet of the Female Invaders*, 1967). In Rafael Portillo's *La momia azteca contra el robot humano* (*The Aztec Mummy vs. the Human Robot*, 1958), an instalment of the Aztec mummy series, the bandaged Prince Popoca faces off against a homemade mechanical man. *Santo el enmascarado de plata vs. la invasión de los marcianos* (*Santo vs. the Martian Invasion*, 1967), finds Mexico's greatest wrestler El Santo (the Saint) coping with aliens as deftly as he coped with everything from vampire women to *el hombre lobo* in his long career.



LondonMexfest takes place at Rich Mix, East London between 17-19 August

SPLIT DECISION

In the first of his new monthly column, Brad Stevens ponders the difference between 'best' and 'favourite' films in the light of this issue's poll results

By Brad Stevens

Sight & Sound's 'Greatest Films' poll generated some interesting discussions about the difference (if any) between the terms 'best' and 'favourite', the general assumption being that the films many of us consider the most important ever made would not necessarily be those we'd take with us to a desert island – that our intellectual choices would not neatly correspond with our emotional ones. *S&S* contributor Tim Lucas admitted on his Facebook page that his list of personal favourites would be quite different from the 'ten best' list he submitted to *S&S*, and would probably include Howard Hawks's *Man's Favorite Sport?* (a film that seems to me artistically superior to Tim's number-one choice, Marcel Carné's *Les Enfants du paradis*). These discussions took place soon after the death of Theodoros Angelopoulos – a combination of events that prompted me to speculate on the relationship between emotional and intellectual responses to works of art.

My speculations focused on Angelopoulos for the simple reason that he was responsible for what remains by far the oddest reaction I have ever had to a film. I first encountered his *The Beekeeper* (1986) when it was screened on Channel 4 in the late 1980s, and to say that my response was a negative one would be putting it mildly: I found the film interminable, could see absolutely nothing of interest in it, and immediately forgot about it. Some six months later, I began thinking about *The Beekeeper* again, and realised that I had been deeply moved by it, but at a completely subconscious level. I should stress that nothing happened to remind me of the film: I didn't come across a reference to it, or read something about its auteur. It simply bubbled up from my memory, and refused to budge.

I recalled this experience when I watched Artificial Eye's DVD of Angelopoulos's *The Suspended Step of the Stork* (1991) a few days after the director passed away, and was greatly affected – for reasons I couldn't initially understand – by the final shot, a four-minute take showing the protagonist Alexandre (Gregory Karr) walking past a line of telegraph poles that are being ascended by workers holding telephone wires. In the documentary *Balkan Landscapes: The Gaze of Theodoros Angelopoulos* (shown as part of the Channel 4 series *Rear Window* in 1993), Jules Dassin insists this shot is entirely positive in its implications, relating it to the film's concern with breaking down borders ("It's saying, 'Let's reach the world, let's talk, let's communicate'"). But this image strikes me as far more ambiguous, the details of Angelopoulos's *mise en scène* – the cloudy sky, the mournful music, the way the camera finally pulls back to reveal that river



Reading between the lines: 'The Suspended Step of the Stork'

formerly associated with the border motif – suggesting little reason for optimism.

Angelopoulos's work is often perceived as near incomprehensible to audiences unfamiliar with the details of Greek politics, but I would claim that this viewpoint is at best limiting, at worst actively misleading: tempting as it may be to see those dance sequences in which his oeuvre is so rich as being heavily symbolic, their function is clearly quite different. *The Beekeeper*, for example, shows a nameless young woman (Nadia Mourouzi) dancing alone to a song with the English-language lyric "All by myself, I'm bound to make it", a dying man (Serge Reggiani) dancing by himself near the ocean and several guests dancing at the wedding of the daughter of Spyros (Marcello Mastroianni). One might expect Angelopoulos to make a distinction between the solitary and communal dances, but if Mourouzi's energetic dance seems strangely joyless, the dance at the wedding lacks both energy and joy. Mourouzi's character lives totally in the present ("I don't remember anything," she insists), while Spyros (whom she dubs "Mr I Remember") is weighed down by the past, both alternatives coming across as equally unattractive.

For Angelopoulos, community/memory and isolation/amnesia are less opposed terms than variations on a single dilemma, the problem of the group (or society) being the problem of the individual writ large. This idea is also expressed in *The Suspended Step of the Stork*: the men

Angelopoulos represents an ideal of 'pure' cinema, one that aspires to the condition of poetry or music

positioning the telephone wires are engaged in a group project, but nonetheless remain isolated on separate poles, the carefully choreographed precision with which they carry out their task and the way they remain motionless once it has been completed suggesting that communal and solitary activities are two sides of the same coin. The pessimism with which Angelopoulos regards Greece's political dilemmas is simply one way of expressing a much wider pessimism.

What fascinates me is the realisation that I had not only 'understood' all this emotionally before I was ready to articulate it intellectually, but that I would have been quite unable to 'read' this scene adequately without the background of my initial response. Surely Esther Summerson, the heroine of Dickens's *Bleak House*, was speaking for us all when she insisted, "My comprehension is quickened when my affection is." When we talk about emotional reactions to films, novels or plays, we usually have in mind feelings of empathy connected with specific characters, and linked directly to our being caught up in the flow of the narrative. Yet my first response to *The Suspended Step of the Stork* had more in common with the kind of emotions one might feel on hearing a Beethoven symphony.

Angelopoulos represented an ideal of 'pure' cinema, one that aspires to the condition of poetry or music, and I can see now that it was precisely his humanist pessimism – tinged with both optimism and sadness – that I first rejected and then embraced so enthusiastically when I watched *The Beekeeper*. Intellectual responses always develop from emotional ones, and may originate at even deeper levels, to which we can only gradually gain access. Which is one of the reasons why my list of 'greatest' films and my list of favourites would be absolutely identical.

FOR AND AGAINST

THE FILM CANON

Forum is a new section dedicated to cinema debates, rethinks and controversies. In this first instalment, we reflect on the relevance or otherwise of cinematic canons – collectively arrived at lists of the best, greatest or most significant films deemed essential to the legacy of cinema as an art form. But are canons useful or are they just a doomed enterprise, prone to charges of elitism and reductionism? Here two of our regular contributors argue the toss



Poll position: does the presence of 'Citizen Kane' in lists of the greatest films of all time decade after decade now render all judgement on it empty?

FOR

By Henry K. Miller

Many years ago, I began to research how films came to be taken seriously. I set out glibly antagonistic, or perhaps productively sceptical, towards what I was writing about: the original film snobs.

But by studying the men and women who founded the first repertory cinemas and film archives, wrote the first histories, fought battles against censorship, won over parts of the cultural and political establishments, and imported and exhibited films no big-time distributor or chain would touch, I realised how much I was taking for granted. For the likes of Elsie Cohen, manager of the Academy cinema in the 1930s, the idea of a film canon was practically axiomatic.

The rise of the talkie made wordlessness unremunerative; those who saw value in

silent films had to act fast to preserve them. There was no prospect of keeping everything in circulation, but nor was there any burning desire to do so. The people who wanted to see old films, or read about them, weren't acting out of nostalgia or even historical interest, but informed enthusiasm; and there was, and is, enough to be getting on with already. The canon is a way of making sense of past and present together.

The danger of extinction has receded. Whereas voters in the earliest *Sight & Sound* polls were often inspired by memories, cherished if not reliable, of single screenings, successive home entertainment revolutions have made available more old (English-language) films than anyone could sanely

At its most basic, the canon is the outcome of a process of communal or institutional valuation

absorb. But there remains the practical question of what to restore, revive, study, teach, discuss at length. It will always be this, and not that; the debate is over criteria. The arrangement is inevitably hierarchical, but the alternative – not propagating the old and difficult and possibly foreign – is even more so, restricting the appreciation of the best to a historically better-favoured but dwindling cognoscenti.

Not, of course, that everyone agrees on what the best might be, but that's where the conversation begins. At its most basic, the canon is the outcome of a process of communal or institutional valuation. A border-crossing popular entertainment that was belatedly recognised as an art form, and later still made an object of academic study – and which is even now named after a medium that is virtually defunct – film has always been in the midst of an identity crisis, and film culture is amazingly lively and heterogeneous as a result. In theory, the pro-canon argument cuts against the grain of its liveliest parts, on the supposedly anarchic internet, but in my experience “the

internet” is, if anything, obsessively canonist.

It tends rather to be in academia that valuation is regarded with suspicion, though opposition to canons is easily confused with opposition to *the* canon, which is an entirely canonist attitude. The usual construction – that something has been neglected – is a way of saying it should have been attended to, ie included in the canon; though it is not in itself a clinching argument. In British film studies in particular, the canon is seemingly assailed by the sociological view: valuation is a merely ideological project, and a so-called bad film may tell us as much, if not more, about the society that produced it, than a so-called good one. Yet even that is a form of valuation, albeit recon-dite.

The essence of the canonist view, put most eloquently by Frank Kermode, though he himself confined cinema to “deuterocanonical” status, is that the good film continues to be found valuable, in new ways, in the present. Its “evil associations” with past injustice might not be transcended, but their enumeration cannot be the primary reason to keep watching and talking. A stronger impetus is the state of the art. Paraphrasing T. S. Eliot, Kermode described how, for artists and poets, “fidelity to tradition is ensured by revolutionary action”, while for critics the introduction of the new work modifies “the sense of the old”. Fluctuations in the film canon are similarly motivated.

The canon is not to be confused with the straight scholarly history. Its candidates, as Kermode argued in *Forms of Attention*, are often promoted by “ignorant opinion”, by enthusiasts “more passionate than accurate”, whose “connoisseurship was far from exact”. But it is from that source that seriousness stems.

AGAINST

By Hannah McGill

If you work in film, you get used to it. Relatives, taxi drivers, party guests, dates – they all ask the same question. Glee-fu-ly, as if no one could ever have asked you before.

“So, what’s your favourite film?”

It’s not so much that I don’t want to answer. It’s that I can’t. My mind freezes up. I should just adopt a default favourite that pleases everyone – *Raiders of the Lost Ark!* *Goodfellas!* – but even the

When I look back on 20 years of intensive film viewing, the selection of ten titles seems not just hard, but meaningless



‘Chungking Express’

obvious contenders evade me in the white heat of panic. Given that I can’t summon an answer in those casual, inconsequential situations, it’s little wonder that end-of-year critics’ polls give me the advanced heebie-jeebies. So a poll that seeks to fix the ten greatest films OF ALL TIME EVER...? Book me on the next flight out of here. I cannot do it. I get very elusive. I’m often elusive to editors, come deadline time, but this is zealous and studied elusiveness. Why? Insecurity? Do I fear the judgement of my peers and my elders? Not so much – I’m pretty fighty, pretty good at being opinionated. I programmed a film festival; that means putting your taste out there for the whole world to critique. My problem with the top ten poll is that I’m not sure it’s a format that accounts for the complexity of our response to works of art. It seeks to impose order on something inherently disordered. How do I measure the impact *The Gospel According to St. Matthew* had on me against that of *Heathers*? What about a film that blew my head off when I was 19, like *Chungking Express* or *Stranger than Paradise*, that now seems slight, partly because it’s been imitated all the way out of relevance? What about the guilty pleasure films that would probably get worn out on the desert island DVD player while *Ordet* and *Shoah* and *Hiroshima mon amour* gathered dust? I probably know all the dialogue from *Apocalypse Now* and all the dialogue from

Hedwig and the Angry Inch, but do I ‘like’ one more than the other? Those films fulfil such different functions that comparing apples with oranges is eminently reasonable by comparison.

Partly, it’s sheer bulk. When I look back on 20 years of intensive film viewing – as a student, as a critic, as a festival director and as a fan – the selection of ten titles seems not just hard, but meaningless. (And I am a lightweight by comparison to many of my colleagues in the ranks of critics.) If you watch close to as many films in a year as there are days in that year, and you do that over decades, is it really feasible to pick out *ten*?

Then there’s life experience. Responses change as experience amasses; films on divorce, say, or childbirth or death, affect us radically differently as we encounter those events. Which response is the purer? The one I had before experience intervened, or the one I had after?

And how long does it take for a film to settle enough to be considered canonical? The presence of *Citizen Kane* in the poll decade after decade begins to render any judgement on it empty: it can’t be seen without the ‘greatest film of all time’ baggage that it carries. I think *4 Months 3 Weeks and 2 Days* is a better film. Or *The Beat that my Heart Skipped*. Possibly *Finding Nemo*. But would such a film ever amass the sort of ballast Kane has? Seniority and nostalgia play such a huge role (and so many flaws are forgiven in films of monumental reputation) that new films can’t compete.

I’m aware that part of the reason my friends at this magazine pursue me for my top ten is that their bank of critics under-represents women. This leads us to another question: whether the forging of canons is an inherently male compulsion. Evading for the time being the question of how much our behaviour and processes owe to physiology and how much to environment or socialisation (because in practice, what’s the difference?), it is widely accepted that the male brain is more wont to systemise. The fixing of orders and making of lists can hence be construed as more appealing to the male of the species. I don’t know if this is the case. I do wonder if the poll needs a shift in format, or a handicap system to keep the usual suspects from queering the scores. Every year we add thousands of new contenders to the pool. Whatever gender you happen to be, can a list ever provide a useful roadmap through such vast territory?



‘The Gospel According to St. Matthew’



‘Heathers’



‘Shoah’

DEATH WATCH, MOONRISE KINGDOM ...

Letters are welcome, and should be addressed to the Editor at Sight & Sound, BFI, 21 Stephen Street, London W1T 1LN
Fax: 020 7436 2327 Email: S&S@bfi.org.uk

Homage to Bond

May I politely offer a small addition to Joseph Bevan's brilliant missive on Christopher Nolan's work ('Escape Artist', S&S, August)? Bevan argues engagingly and convincingly how Nolan "may be the first director" to square up to the videogames industry directly in terms of wrestling the eyes of the console generation from the TV screen to the silver screen.

One of Bevan's examples is the climactic alpine-based set piece from *Inception* (2010), mirroring the popular *Splinter Cell* franchise. Nolan's affection for *On Her Majesty's Secret Service* (1969) is well documented, and the sequence in question is perhaps – I would suggest – more a reverential homage to this Bond movie rather than a challenge to the gaming industry.

Richard Sherwood-Farnfield
Maidstone

A rebirth for 'Death Watch'

Imagine my delight when coming across Pasquale Iannone's piece on Tavernier's *Death Watch* ('Life Expectancy', S&S, June). Since viewing the film back in the early 1980s, it has been my favourite film of all time. Aside from its technical mastery, I've always found it incredibly moving, a film of ideas and emotion, transcending the David Compton novel source, which seemed to lack the latter.

It was fascinating to read in the article of the influence of Fleischer's *Violent Saturday*, and of Tavernier's thoughts on voiceovers, *Death Watch* being one film that definitely gives a lie to the notion that including a voiceover automatically indicates lazy writing. I had heard years ago that the film was shot simultaneously in French and English, perhaps to appease its American star?

Fascinating too were the bits about the contrast in Harvey Keitel and Romy Schneider's acting styles. Schneider's work in this film is luminous and Keitel's is some of his most subtle. But mention should also be made of the superb supporting roles played by Harry Dean Stanton and Max von Sydow, the latter's practically defining gravitas.

Ben Murray Edmonton, Alberta, Canada

Orchestral manoeuvres

There's an additional reason to agree with Michael Hudson's complaint (Letters, S&S, August) that Sam Davies, in his review of Wes Anderson's *Moonrise Kingdom* (S&S, July), makes "no mention of the use of music in the film". According to Davies, Anderson's films are "remakes with surface variations". In a similar fashion, Nick Pinkerton, in his recent article ('An Island of His Own', S&S, June), notes that "criticisms of Anderson's movies... tend to revolve around the fact that they are too much like Wes Anderson movies".

It is striking, then, that neither Davies nor Pinkerton mentions the fact that the opening credits of Anderson's new film are accompanied

LETTER OF THE MONTH LEARNING FROM THE DARK KNIGHT



Thank you Joseph Bevan and 'S&S' for the timely essay on Christopher Nolan ('Escape Artist', S&S, August), and particularly for putting his works into a transmedia and collaborative context. I agree that their escapism "could be read as a refusal of any radical action in the real world". Yet it seems in keeping with the narrative sophistication of these films – a postmodern fictive strategy epitomised by Cobb's spinning totem at the end of 'Inception', which leaves one uncertain about what the facts of the story actually are – that at least some of Nolan's work can be read as the precise opposite.

When I first saw 'The Dark Knight' in summer 2008, at the height of the intensely divisive McCain vs Obama election campaign

in the US, certain choices explored by the story (to achieve aims by killing or without killing, to survive at others' costs or by accruing costs – as writ large, respectively, in the chase-sequence showdown between Batman and The Joker, and the ferry-sequence showdown between civilians and convicts) seemed to me to reflect core debates in the election, and bigger divisions in US (and indeed UK) culture. Can one read 'The Dark Knight' in this way, as a call to political arms, perhaps with one convict's humanist choice on the ferry signalling the movie's political bias? To borrow a relevant phrase, "Yes we can." As with any interesting work of art, though, the totem will keep us spinning.

Dr Nicholas Reyland Keele University

by Benjamin Britten's 'The Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra', whose narrator explains that Britten's "big piece of music" contains "smaller pieces called 'variations', which means different ways of playing the same tune". This is surely a recognition on Anderson's part of the now-standard criticism – and perhaps also an invitation to view the film that follows in light of it.

Daniel Whiting Southampton

Solidarity with Boris Barnet

I enjoyed Mark Le Fanu's article on Boris Barnet ('Revolutionary Road', S&S, August). However I did have some concerns about his comments. He seems to equate sound on film with "audible synched dialogue". This is only part of its contribution; it also includes noise and the music that was once performed live alongside the screening; none necessarily in synch. Moreover sound affects the very production and structure of film. Examples of this are noted by Guillermo del Toro in his article on Alfred Hitchcock ('Lessons of Darkness', S&S, August). The two versions (silent and sound) of *Blackmail* offer numerous examples of how sound affects film.

I was more concerned about Le Fanu's belief

that there is a contradiction between "service to the [socialist] state" and "moral integrity". He clearly holds assumptions that I do not share. And Barnet's famous film *The House on Trubnaya Street* (*Dom na Trubnoi*) offers an example that denies this contradiction. As the film nears its climax, there is a performance in a workers' club re-enacting the revolutionary storming of the Bastille. At this point the heroine breaks through the notional fourth wall of the stage in a class-conscious action of revolutionary solidarity.

I greatly admire Barnet's work on film, but I also think that it is representative of and influenced by Soviet film and Soviet culture.

Keith Withall Leeds

Additions and corrections

August p.53 *Chernobyl Diaries*: no 'The' in the title; p.53 *Comes a Bright Day*, Cert 15, 90m 43s, 8,164 ft +8 frames; p.54 *Detachment*: editors: Barry Alexander Brown, Geoffrey Richman; p.55 *Eames The Architect and the Painter*, Cert 12A, 84m 41s, 7,621 ft +8 frames; p.56 *El Bulli Cooking in Progress*, Cert 12A, 113m 20s, 10,200 ft +0 frames; p.56 *Electric Children*, Cert 15, 95m 26s, 8,589 ft +0 frames; p.62 *Lay the Favourite*, Cert 15, 93m 31s, 8,416 ft +8 frames; p.69 *Revenge of the Electric Car*, Cert PG 90m 2s, 8,103 ft +0 frames; p.72 *7 Days in Havana*, Cert 15, 128m 42s, 11,583 ft +0 frames; p.73 *A Simple Life*, Cert PG, 118m 6s, 10,629 ft +0 frames; p.73 *Something from Nothing The Art of Rap*, Cert 15, 111m 34s, 10,041 ft +0 frames; p.77 *Ted*, Cert 15, 106m 5s, 9,547 ft +8 frames; p.79 *Undeclared*, Cert 12A, 113m 27s, 10,210 ft +8 frames



LastExitToNowhere.com

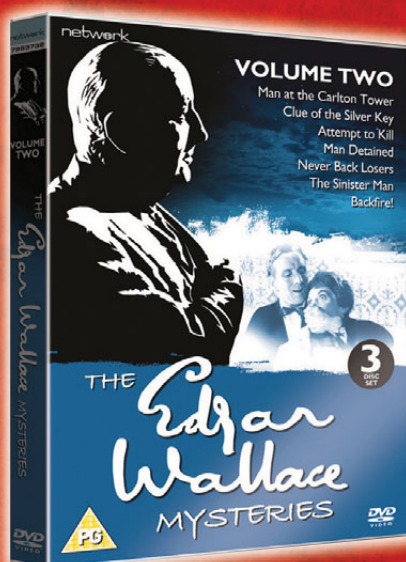
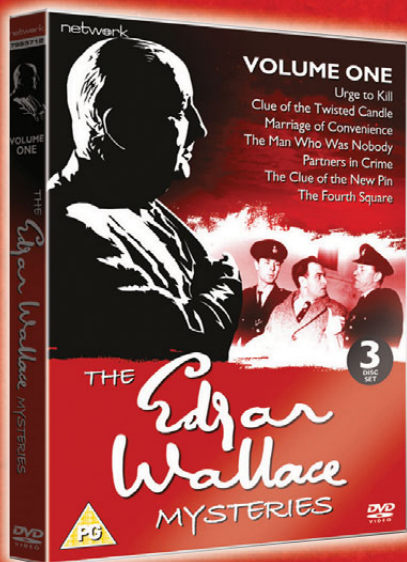
"Last Exit remains our first port of call for all subtly movie-centric gear." EMPIRE



@LASTEXITshirts | Find us on FACEBOOK

network

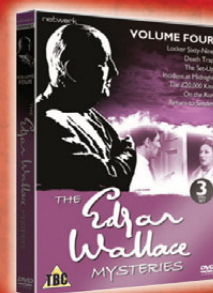
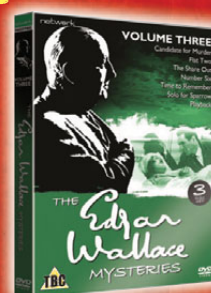
THE EDGAR WALLACE MYSTERIES



VOLUMES ONE AND TWO

- Merton Park Studios' finest, now available for the first time
- Newly restored from original film elements
- Contains additional rarely seen thrillers from the period
- Exclusive booklets by author **Kim Newman**
- Image Galleries and PDFs

COMING
SOON



OUT ON DVD 30 JULY

www.networkonair.com

Free Super Saver Delivery and Unlimited Free One-Day Delivery with Amazon Prime are available. Terms and Conditions apply. See Amazon.co.uk for details.

amazon.co.uk

fresh produce



le havre
subtitled/french

£10



Packaging Copyright © 2012 Artificial Eye



elles
subtitled/french
released 20/08/12

£10

city of life
subtitled/arabic
released 20/08/12

£10



© Goodfellas



© Third Window Films

himizu
subtitled/japanese

£10

twitter.com/foppofficial

fopp stores

bristol college green // cambridge sidney st // edinburgh rose st // glasgow union st & byres rd // london covent garden & gower st // manchester brown st // nottingham queen st

suck it and see: buy your cds, dvds and books from fopp – if they suck we'll give you a swap or your lolly

This offer applies to all cds, dvds and books in store and is only available on production of a valid receipt dated no more than four weeks from the time of your original purchase. Goods must be in the condition as sold, both the sleeve/case, disc or spine/pages. We reserve the right to refuse this offer. This offer in no way affects your statutory right. Titles subject to availability, while stocks last. Individual titles which appear elsewhere in the store, outside of this campaign, may be priced differently.

Reviews

86 Films of the month



94 Films



120 Home Cinema



130 Books



111 Shadow Dancer

James Marsh is really on top of his game here – he has grasped the jarring disjunction between quotidian ordinariness and sudden bloodshed which marked life for anyone in the orbit of Northern Ireland's Troubles during those calamitous years





Noises off: Toby Jones in 'Berberian Sound Studio'

Berberian Sound Studio

United Kingdom 2011

Director: Peter Strickland

Certificate 15 92m 6s

Reviewed by Sam Davies

See Feature
on page 32

A cabbage, a kitchen knife and a microphone: what untold depths of horror can be delved into using just these items? In a parallel dimension it could be a task from *Blue Peter*. This second feature by *Katalin Varga* director Peter Strickland is a love letter to the weird territories of foley and film sound and also to *giallo*, the grand-guignol horror genre carved into the flesh of Italian cinema by Argento, Fulci, Crispino, Avati et al in the 1970s. It follows Gilderoy (Toby Jones), a tweedy, buttoned-down sound engineer, as he leaves the cosy quiet of his home in 1970s Surrey for Italy, to work with Santini, fictionalised *giallo* producer and impresario. Like *Dracula's* Harker, Gilderoy is an innocent abroad, a Home Counties product bewildered by Continental sophistication, an employee increasingly aware that there is something not very... *nice* about his new employers.

The film opens with Gilderoy arriving at the reception of the Berberian Sound Studio to

work on the post-production of Santini's latest picture, and once there it never leaves. It's an intensely inward-looking piece: in contrast to *Katalin Varga* (2009), a revenge narrative shot on location with natural lighting, *Berberian Sound Studio* is entirely enclosed, taking place within a claustrophobic handful of rooms and corridors under electric light. As a film about a film genre it hits all the notes of classic *giallo*: Santini's project, *The Equestrian Vortex*, is an outrageously exploitative potboiler, overflowing with blood, nubile young women, undead witches, horrific torture and an 'aroused goblin'.

Berberian Sound Studio is also fascinated by the mechanics of its own form. The camera roves over Gilderoy's charts, his maps of how sounds and effects will overlay the visuals. It zooms in lovingly on the moment of projection itself: the glare of white light, the dust dancing, the click and whir of wheels, reels and spindles. But above all, of course, this is a film that revels in sound, its production, its recording and mixing. It fetishises unashamedly the look, feel and sound of vintage analogue recording gear: valves hum, metal reels revolve, spiderwebs of tea-brown tape loop round the room, recalling those lingering shots of what was then cutting-edge tape technology in other films of the 1970s: Coppola's *The Conversation* or Alan J. Pakula's *Kluge*. At one

point Gilderoy demonstrates a device called the Watkins Copicat for lead actor Silvia, dazzling her with the uncanny way in which its simple tape-looping mechanism doubles, triples and quadruples her voice, its echo and its echo's echo to create a sonic hall of mirrors.

Numerous scene shifts pivot on a shared sound: a shriek that spooks Gilderoy in his apartment might gutter out to become the beginning of a scene with him behind the mixing desk once more, about to press rewind on the same shriek. As the film progresses and Gilderoy unravels, the weight of these sonic illusions and tweaks begins to play on the viewer's mind. The dialogue is increasingly in Italian rather than English. Is Jones overdubbed you wonder, trying to track the movement of his



Above: Cosimo Fusco as director Coraggio



The film zooms in lovingly on the moment of production itself: the glare of white light, the dust dancing, the click and whirr of wheels, reels and spindles

spellbound with his impression of a hovering UFO, conjured using a lightbulb and a radiator. References to his past work in children's TV and documentaries set him up as a kind of amalgam of the garden-shed inventiveness of Oliver Postgate and the Radiophonic Workshop with the public-service ethos of the Open University. Jones plays him with admirable restraint: while Cosimo Fusco as director Coraggio fills the cramped studio, ruthlessly annexing personal space, Jones's performance is so understated that Gilderoy's deterioration can be tracked through his slow decline from perfectly turned out to tie-less, unbuttoned slob.

The viewer never sees a frame of *The Equestrian Vortex*, apart from the title sequence (brilliantly realised by designer Julian House from Ghost Box). Instead you watch others – Gilderoy, Coraggio, Silvia, Santini – watching it, their faces pallid or blood red in its reflected light. It comes to exist for the viewer as if in negative: things normally hidden or disguised in its production are unveiled and foregrounded. Instead of human viscera, we see the watermelons laid out on tables as studio assistants belabour them with machetes, creating a sound-only orgy of violence. Enacting this violence takes a particular toll on Gilderoy: having to perform endless takes in which, through the proxy of that cabbage and kitchen knife he eviscerates an undead witch or penetrates her with a red-hot poker, becomes a form of psychological torture for him.

Santini's reaction to Gilderoy's qualms over the material is intense. "It's not a horror film," he insists, "it's a Santini film." If it is

violent, he explains, it is only because reality is violent and he must convey the truth of reality: he has a moral duty to do so. It's a revealing moment, when suddenly we could be listening not to Argento or Fulci confronted by Mary Whitehouse but rather to Eli Roth, and Strickland taps into a long discourse about violence that extends far beyond *giallo*, both further back in time and right up to the torture porn of the present day.

Such serious debates don't dominate *Berberian Sound Studio* though; more often it's quietly very funny, especially in its use of Gilderoy for bathetic payoffs – the spell of a blood-curdling take or sequence will be broken by a mild request for some fresher marrow. It's a joke Strickland uses brilliantly and returns to often – and perhaps found too hard to resist. My criticism of *Berberian Sound Studio* is that in the end – or at the end to be more precise – it isn't scary enough. Does it need to be? Strickland is on record as saying, just as Santini says of *The Equestrian Vortex*, that it's not a horror film, "not in a million years". It is then more accurately a film *about* horror; and yet this creates an awkward collision. Gleelessly invoking a bucketload of genre markers, Strickland also throws in numerous signifiers of dread: an implacably blinking blood-red 'silenzio' light; slow zooms on a barrel of discarded vegetables, rotten and pulsing like decomposing viscera. There's an implied arc familiar from any horror film, towards a final welter of blood and gore, or a monstrous reveal. *Berberian Sound Studio* refuses such a climax: it at once celebrates *giallo* and takes it apart, disassembling it like Derren Brown explaining an illusion. The more naturalistic, bloodless narrative, in which Gilderoy breaks up as a person, isn't carried through to the extreme a *giallo*-inspired film would seem to demand. Strickland's film is perhaps more Gilderoy-like than he realises: approaching this genre in polite tribute but too reserved to follow it behind the bloody curtain into the desecrated crypt.

lips to his lines? Is it a meta-comment on how 'embedded' and native Gilderoy has gone, how thoroughly absorbed into *giallo* he has become?

The music matches, or rather bleeds seamlessly into and through, the playful use of sound and sound effects. There are pitch-perfect pastiches of the soundtracks created for *giallo* by Italian prog groups such as Goblin (Argento's *Suspiria* and *Deep Red* most famously) – ambitious collages of synth, exotic percussion, *musique concrète*, electronics and rock that scaled the full heights of hysterical bombast. In fact the soundtrack is largely British, with original music composed by James Cargill of Broadcast, and Nurse With Wound and Roj used elsewhere. In this sense it taps into an aesthetic current in British music known as hauntology: the artists involved (centred on the Ghost Box label) use loving pastiche to recreate a milieu that, since Thatcher, has seemed improbably antique in its commitment to egalitarian modernism and public service fostered in such institutions as the pre-marketised BBC.

Gilderoy is a quite brilliant portrait of a particular type of near-extinct British boffinry beloved of hauntologists. "Oh, I'd rather not get technical," he murmurs at one point, desperate to avoid another intense, Latin conversation. The joke is that getting technical is precisely his strength – at one point he holds a room

Credits

Produced by
Keith Griffiths
Mary Burke
Written by
Peter Strickland
Cinematographer
Nic Knowland
Editor
Chris Dickens
Production Designer
Jennifer Kernke
Original Music by
Broadcast
Written &
Performed by:
James Cargill
Trish Keenan
**Supervising
Sound Editor**
Joakim Sundström
Costume Designer
Julian Day

©Channel Four
Television, The
British Film Institute,
Illuminations
Films Limited,
Warp X Limited
**Production
Companies**
Film4 and UK Film
Council present in
association with
Screen Yorkshire
and Geißendörfer
Film- und

Fernsehproduktion KG
An Illuminations Films
& Warp X Production
Executive Producers
Robin Gutch
Hugo Heppell
Katherine Butler
Michael Weber

Cast
Toby Jones
Gilderoy
Cosimo Fusco
Francesco Coraggio
Antonio Mancino
Giancarlo Santini
Fatma Mohamed
Silvia as Teresa
Salvatore Li Causi
Fabio
Chiara D'Anna
Elisa as Teresa
Tonia Sotiropoulou
Elena
Eugenia Caruso
Claudia as Monica
Susanna Cappellaro
Veronica as
accused witch
Guido Adorni
Lorenzo
Lara Parmiani
Chiara as Signora
Colatina
Jozef Cseres
Massimo

Dolby Digital
In Colour
[1.85:1]
Part-subtitled

Distributor
Artificial Eye Film
Company

8,289 ft +0 frames

Synopsis

Italy, the 1970s. Gilderoy, a sound engineer from Dorking, arrives to work on a recently shot film at the Berberian Sound Studio. He struggles with the language as he attempts to get his airfare reimbursed, and finds it difficult to deal with director Coraggio and with the elusiveness of impresario and producer Santini, whose name has drawn him to the project. Gilderoy also struggles with the film itself, 'The Equestrian Vortex'; he is shocked by its extreme violence and supernatural themes. Manipulated by Coraggio and Santini, thwarted by recalcitrant secretaries and engineers, disturbed by the volatile voiceover actors and the presence of Santini's playboy nephew Fabio, Gilderoy retreats in the evenings to the flat adjoining the studio, where he listens to his personal archive of recordings made in his Surrey home and corresponds with his mother.

Gilderoy makes progress with the film, and impresses with his technical ingenuity and know-how, but the psychological and physical violence of the film begins to take its toll. He hallucinates; his dress deteriorates; he loses his temper. Silvia, the actor cast in the lead role of Teresa, quits the production, disgusted by Santini's advances and Coraggio's bullying. She destroys the tapes of her performance, setting back Gilderoy's work. Gilderoy struggles to maintain his grip on reality, his state of mind worsened by disturbing letters from his mother. With a new actor, Elisa, hired for the role of Teresa, Gilderoy now colludes with Coraggio's bullying, feeding noise at excruciating volume into Elisa's headphones to elicit the right kind of scream.

The Dark Knight Rises

USA/United Kingdom 2012

Director: Christopher Nolan

Certificate 12A 164m 27s

Reviewed by Kim Newman

The most memorable joke in Leslie H. Martinson's fondly remembered 'campy' *Batman* film (1966) finds the po-faced caped crusader (Adam West) running about the Gotham waterfront in broad daylight with a giant fizzing cartoon infernal device. The hero is repeatedly thwarted in his attempts to throw it in the water before it explodes by young lovers, passing nuns or innocent tweeting birds. "Some days," West deadpans, "you just can't get rid of a bomb." Christopher Nolan's Bat-films, which now form a complete trilogy, are about as far in approach as possible from the jokey pop-art tone of the 1960s TV series that spun off the film. However, the whole climax of this epic-length instalment – which plays on a heroic scale, with soaring Hans Zimmer music and floods of tears – turns out to be a variation on that same situation, with a much bigger bomb and the whole of Gotham City in peril.

Needless to say, we are a world away from shark-repellent bat-spray, but the strength of the Batman franchise in all its many forms – from the character's introduction in Detective Comics in 1939 through to the computer game *Arkham City* last year – is that the set-up is open to all manner of legitimate, workable approaches.

Following *Batman Begins* (2005) and *The Dark Knight* (2008), *The Dark Knight Rises* has to pick up plot threads from the earlier films. The late Heath Ledger's Joker goes unmentioned, but every other old foe or threat is present in some form, and we see the toll they have taken on Christian Bale's limping, grey-streaked Bruce Wayne, who has become a Howard Hughes-like recluse, to the exasperation of Michael Caine's slightly hectoring Alfred. Harvey Dent (Aaron Eckhart), aka Two-Face, is now remembered as a false hero whose atrocities have been covered up in order to justify what sound like swingeing anti-crime laws ('the Dent Act'), which have put an end to the criminal empires featured in the earlier films. The legacy of the Fu Manchu-like Ra's al Ghul (Liam Neeson) and his League of Shadows is made manifest in the bulky, masked, braggart form of Bane (Tom Hardy), a seeming anarchist in a sheepskin jacket, and the not-too-concealed presence of a literal offspring of the demon out to pay Bruce/Batman/Gotham back for the villain's failure and death at the end of *Batman Begins*. Even the Scarecrow (Cillian Murphy), secondary bad guy in both earlier films, shows up as a Kafkaesque judge in a topsy-turvy Gotham, sitting atop a mountain of desks with straw poking out of his shoulder, offering cops and businessfolk a brutal choice between death or exile (exile involves a short walk across dangerous ice).

The light and dark sides of Gotham City and of the

hero's personality are reflected by two women who, as the film progresses, inevitably change positions. Anne Hathaway's sleek, red-lipped klepto Selina Kyle is never called Catwoman but is identified by the trade name ('The Cat') the character went by in her very first comics appearance, while Marion Cotillard's energy-boosting, new-to-this-universe philanthropist at least gets to have sex with Wayne before Selina slips into the cat-suit that makes her impossible to compete with. In a film that could use a dash more fun than it has, Hathaway is the only real bright spark, though even she has to pause for significant, character-testing moments as she wavers between mercenary work for the bad guys, a conservative horror at seeing her anarchist dreams realised and the long-held-off but immensely relishable team-up with her masked soulmate in a climactic mass battle for the soul and the real estate of Gotham.

Much of the noise is made by Hardy's canny thug Bane, a rethink of a villain who was created in the comics to put Wayne out of action temporarily so that other characters could take a turn at being Batman before the original's return. It's hard to remember that Bane, played by the late wrestler Jeep Swenson, was one of the villains in Joel Schumacher's much despised and franchise-derailing effort *Batman & Robin* (1997), and here he's used, as in his comics storyline, to put Bruce in a mid-film hole that he has to crawl out of to rebuild his heroic identity. Once that's done and Gotham City is cut off from the rest of America by terrorist attacks – as it was by an earthquake in the lengthy 'No Man's Land' comics story arc – Bane dwindles in stature as Bruce's inner demons and other problems come to the fore. At the end, he's almost casually dismissed – on the pattern of Robert Carlyle's Bond villain in *The World Is Not Enough* (1999), who turned out to be only Sophie Marceau's minion.

As befits the saga's engagement with the economics of Gotham City, a great deal of topical material floats about here, insufficiently digested: an underground army of the dispossessed; a stock-exchange raid that is at once a complicated financial swindle and an Occupy-like blow against the traders; Bane's through-a-mouthpiece-and-megaphone philosophising about the kind of freedom he offers once he's driven all the cops underground. There is a deal too much plotty stuff with multiple macguffins: an identity-wiping computer program, a fusion energy project like the one in *Spider-Man 2* (2004), electronic signatures, Bruce's dead mother's pearls and an undelivered Commissioner Gordon speech revealing the truth about Harvey Dent. In the end, all this is a distraction. Batman ultimately faces someone who has exactly the same motivation as he does – making a city pay for the death of a father. The cycle must continue even if Bruce can get off the merry-go-round. The film sets up Joseph Gordon-Levitt's Officer Blake as a successor to the cowl, even before we're told what his real name is, subtly positioning Juno Temple's kittenish sidekick (very underused) as the next generation's



Stormy knight: Christian Bale as Batman

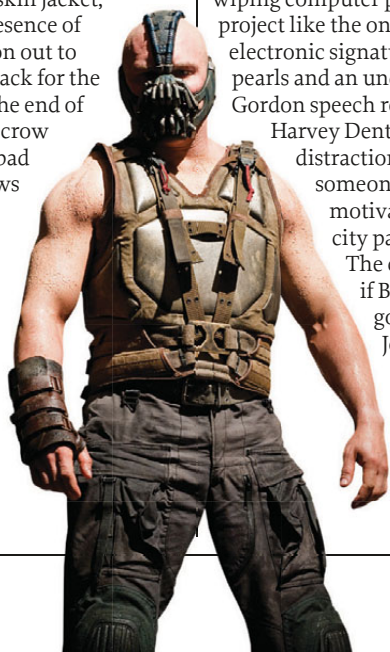
Catwoman – but this is a way of closing down the trilogy while implying that the story continues rather than setting up spin-offs.

Two hours and 45 minutes is a long time for a comic-book superhero tale, especially since it's now the capstone of a marathon three-film saga fated to be a Blu-ray box-set. Even so, there are undeveloped subplots, token roles for continuing characters (Michael Caine's

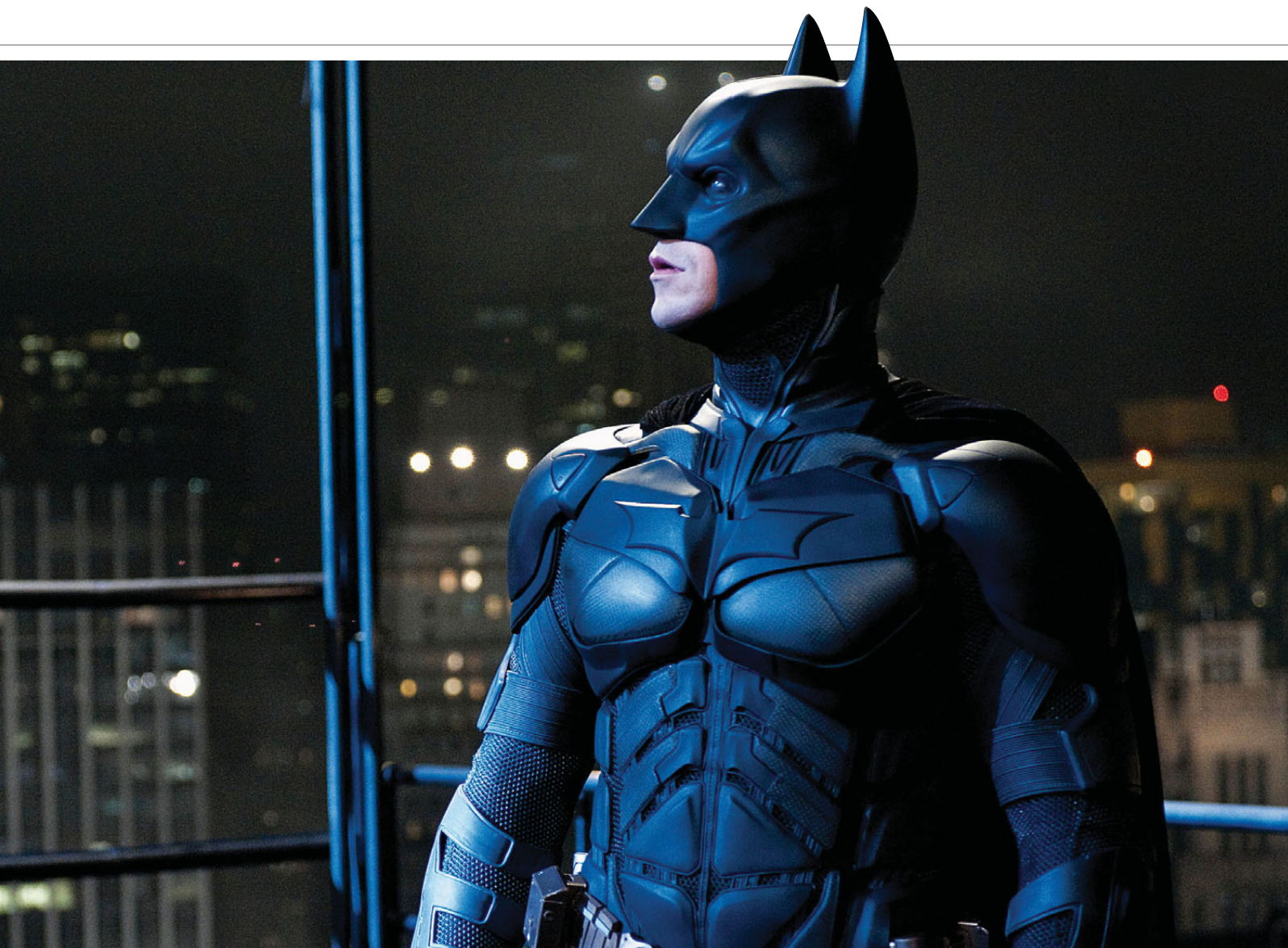
The whole climax of this epic-length instalment plays out on a heroic scale, with soaring Hans Zimmer music and floods of tears



Above: Anne Hathaway as Selina Kyle



Right: Tom Hardy as Bane



Alfred, Morgan Freeman's Lucius Fox and Gary Oldman's Commissioner Gordon are all sidelined for long stretches) and hurried-to-confused crucial scenes between Nolan's IMAX-ready action set pieces. These range from an opening gambit in homage to *Licence to Kill* (1989) through chases with new Bat-vehicles (a versatile attack bike and a stealth flier) to screen-filling street battles between armies of cops and mercenaries. Even after decades of big-budget superhero movies there's still a problem with fight scenes between opponents in constricting costumes, which work less well than the crudely dressed rumbles seen in the 1940s matinee serials that were the characters' first film appearances. Without spider-powers or other mutant abilities, this relies on mixed-martial-arts choreography rather than obvious CGI assistance, but the supposedly epochal punch-up between the Bat and the Bane really doesn't bear the weight the script needs it to. The film takes two long acts to come into focus, and only really fulfils the promise of the set-up once Bruce gets out of the hole (the secret is not to use a safety-rope but to rely on strength of character). The extended climax riffs satisfyingly on heroism, self-sacrifice, Greek tragic levels of vengeance-seeking, dead daddy issues, urban destruction and renewal, citizen power, escape and rebirth and a happy-sad ending/beginning.

Credits

Produced by
Emma Thomas
Christopher Nolan
Charles Roven
Written by
Jonathan Nolan
Christopher Nolan
Story
Christopher Nolan
David S. Goyer
Based upon
characters created
by Bob Kane
**Director of
Photography**

Wally Pfister
Editor
Lee Smith
**Production
Designers**
Nathan Crowley
Kevin Kavanaugh
Music
Hans Zimmer
Sound Designer
Richard King
Costume Designer
Lindy Hemming
Stunt Co-ordinator
Tom Struthers

©[TBC]
**Production
Companies**
Warner Bros.
Pictures presents
in association with
Legendary Pictures a
Syncopy production
A film by Christopher
Nolan
Executive Producers
Benjamin Melniker
Michael E. Uslan
Kevin De La Noy
Thomas Tull

Cast
Christian Bale
Bruce Wayne,
'Batman'
Anne Hathaway
Selina Kyle
Tom Hardy
Bane
Marion Cotillard
Miranda Tate
**Joseph G
ordon-Levitt**
John Blake
Michael Caine
Alfred

Gary Oldman
Commissioner
Jim Gordon
Morgan Freeman
Lucius Fox
**Dolby Digital/
Datasat/SDDS1**
In Colour
[2.35:1]
[1.44:1] - Imax
version

Distributor
Warner Bros
Distributors (UK)
14,800 ft +8 frames

Synopsis

Gotham City. Bruce Wayne has set aside his Batman persona for other ways of improving the world. Discovering that a cold-fusion energy project under the city could too easily be weaponised, he shuts it down, even though his lover, the socialite Miranda Tate, encourages him to keep it going.

Selina Kyle, a high-end thief, raids a Wayne Manor safe to secure Bruce's fingerprints, a mission carried out at the behest of John Daggett, a treacherous Wayne Enterprises board member. Bane, a fearsome mercenary, raids the stock exchange as part of Daggett's plot to bankrupt Wayne by using his prints to authorise worthless transfers. Bruce becomes Batman again to face Bane, who bests him in combat. Bane murders Daggett and rules Gotham as an anarchic state, threatening to

detonate Wayne's reactor if outside authorities move against him. Bruce is dumped in an Asian prison from which only one person, the child of Batman's old mentor/enemy Ra's al Ghul, has ever escaped. John Blake, a policeman who has deduced Batman's secret identity, and Commissioner Gordon, Batman's closest ally, form an underground resistance movement. Bruce escapes from the prison and returns to Gotham to face Ra's al Ghul's child – Miranda, who is in fact Talia al Ghul.

Aided by a semi-reformed Selina, Batman bests Bane and Talia, and removes the fissionable material before it detonates. It's assumed that Bruce has died, but he reveals to his servant Alfred that he and Selina have made a new life. Blake is given the access codes to the Batcave.



Lost boy: Frédéric Bourdin, subject of Bart Layton's documentary 'The Imposter'

The Imposter

United Kingdom 2012

Director: Bart Layton

Certificate 15 98m 33s

Reviewed by Lisa Mullen

The lost-child plot is a primal archetype, guaranteed to push emotional buttons all the way from the Old Testament to the cheesiest daytime soap. Its power comes from the double hit of fear and darkness that it carries. First there's the terror of burning loss: what if your son went missing? And then the chill of horror: what if he came back – as someone else?

It's no wonder that British documentary-maker Bart Layton couldn't believe his luck when he heard about the case of Frédéric Bourdin, a 23-year-old Frenchman who managed to persuade the family of a missing boy from Texas that he was their long-lost son. Nicholas Barclay was 13 when he disappeared in 1994, and would have been 16 at the time Bourdin entered the story. The tale of Bourdin's feat of deception is so extraordinary that it would stretch credibility in a fictionalised account, and Layton's material is so bizarre that the film is frequently forced to confront the unreliability of any claim to authenticity, even its own. Indeed,

Layton relishes the unease that permeates the piece, pulling the audience's sympathies in incompatible directions, setting up climaxes that don't happen and playing formal tricks like stopping the film and reversing it to start the story again from another angle.

This is American gothic at its best, and San Antonio, Texas, is the perfect setting: a bleached-out nowheresville peopled by hardbitten underdogs with careful eyes. Nicholas's story is told via leisurely, emphatically static interviews with his sister Carey (articulate, dignified), his mother Beverley (vacant, evasive) and Carey's ex-husband Bryan (terse, composed). They present the classic narrative: Nicholas was the golden boy, cruelly snatched away, and they are the victims of a heartless world. It's here – at the point where they mention the phone call telling them Nicholas has been found – that the film rewinds and presents its alternative narrator: Bourdin himself.

Layton presents Bourdin very differently; he frames him tightly and allows his animated, expressive face to dominate the screen. As the trickster begins to tell his tale it's hard not to warm to him as a mischief-maker with amazing reserves of initiative and bravado. In a sense he is a lost boy himself, a mixed-race kid abandoned by his father and rejected by his mother, someone who longs only to find a place

where he can experience the loving childhood he never had. His journey to America starts with a simple plan to inveigle himself into a Spanish children's home by pretending to be a nameless, destitute and apparently traumatised teenager. The ruse works but unfortunately he is not allowed to stay nameless forever and, under pressure to give some kind of account of his existence, eventually begins to fish for a new identity for himself via an American agency for missing children. With time tight, he can't be picky: the first name to come through belongs to Nicholas, and this is where the whole thing starts to go strange. How can a balding 23-year-old half-Algerian Frenchman with dark hair, brown eyes, black stubble and a strong French accent possibly be accepted as a 16-year-old blond-haired blue-eyed American boy?

This is, of course, the urgent question at the heart of the film and it's not one that has an easy answer. With the help of the US embassy in Madrid, Carey flies to Spain to meet 'Nicholas' and apparently decides at once that he is her brother. Anything that doesn't fit is explained away by the traumas he claims to have endured during his three missing years, which include kidnap, torture, serial rape, colour-changing eye injections and brainwashing. The Spanish authorities insist on an empirical test: can he identify photographs



How can a balding 23-year-old with dark hair, brown eyes and a French accent possibly be accepted as a 16-year-old blond-haired blue-eyed American boy?



Above: A reconstruction with Bourdin (Adam O'Brian) and FBI agent Nancy Fisher (Cathy Dresbach)

of Nicholas's family members? Well, yes he can; Carey has shown them to him only a few minutes before and has named the various relatives in an attempt to jog his memory. Before long, the US consul is handing over a passport and Bourdin is on a plane to Texas.

Perhaps Bourdin and the Barclay family were a perfect match after all: both sides seem to have been desperate to talk themselves into a narrative from which they felt excluded – that is, the day-to-day normality of banal family life. Because as Bourdin attempts to settle into his hard-won American Dream he starts to realise that things aren't as peachy as he'd hoped. While Carey – in her first trip outside Texas – is amazed to find homely details like Coca-Cola in a foreign Spanish city, Bourdin is surprised at how different San Antonio is from the apple-pie home he had set out to find. The themes of estrangement and otherness that permeate the film resonate with Bourdin's uncanny changeling presence. In this case, though, the unease cuts both ways and the shape-shifter starts to get freaked out in his turn. Even when the game is up and a renowned child psychiatrist has taken one look at the fake Nicholas and declared him to be, apart from anything else, incontrovertibly French, Bourdin is perplexed by the family's unwillingness to give up on their belief in this strange new version of their lost boy. All we need now to complete the gothic mood is a detective digging around under the haunted house. And he duly arrives, in the not insubstantial shape of Charlie Parker, a plain-talking man in possession of a pair of fully functioning eyes, which immediately detect that Bourdin is neither blond nor blue-eyed. Between them, he and Bourdin – who can't resist finishing off the tale himself – produce yet another alternative narrative to muddy the waters.

Layton has presented Bourdin as the ultimate fabulist, a ventriloquising narrator whose words are lip-synched by actors recreating key scenes, as if to emphasise his authorship of the story. Once the lies are rolling, Layton leaves it to the deceived to describe Bourdin's ingenious tricks, cleverly intercutting wordless shots of him peering cheekily into the camera. As we listen to the family and various officials spouting his stories, we admire their ingenuity even while knowing not to believe them. But are we wallowing in ironic distance? Or are we incriminating ourselves in the lie? On one

level, the film makes a social point: Bourdin can spin his tale because it's so easy to slip into the zone of unloved children, who are easy to impersonate because they are largely ignored. But this is not a film about hard realities – it's a detective story, a meditation on the problems of evidence and proof. Among the interviews and reconstructions, small pieces of primary source material appear: photographs, video, news footage. As the conflicting accounts weave and bob around each other, these clues resonate with an enigmatic power: they are facts, and they must be important, yet they refuse to cough up any answers.

Most intriguing of all is a video clip filmed by Nicholas himself before he disappeared, in which he provides a running commentary about his family from behind the camera before turning it briefly on himself. Nicholas – perhaps the only really innocent victim of the piece – is also the absent storyteller, silenced mid-plot. To this day no trace of him has been found. In his place, there is his dark alter ego: the slick and ever-present narrator who finally underestimates the momentum and traction of his own tale. And beyond him, there is Layton, constructing a film as inventive and beguiling as its impish protagonist.

Credits

Produced by
Dimitri Doganis

Directors of Photography
Erik Alexander
Wilson

Film Editor
Lynda Hall

Composer
Andrew Hulme

Sound Design
Anne Nikitin

Sound Design
Paul Davies

4 present a RAW production in association with Red Box Films and Passion Pictures

Executive Producers
John Battsek
Simon Chinn
Molly Thompson
Robert Debitetto
Robert Sharenow
Katherine Butler
Tabitha Jackson

Carey Gibson
Cathy Dresbach
Nancy Fisher
Alan Teichman
Charlie Parker

In Colour
[1.85:1]

Distributor
Picturehouse/
Revolver
Entertainment

8,869 ft + 8 frames

©Imposter Pictures Ltd/AETN
Production Companies
A&E Indie Films,
Film 4 and Channel

Cast
Adam O'Brian
Frédéric Bourdin
Anna Ruben

Synopsis

In 1994 13-year-old Nicholas Barclay disappeared. According to witnesses, he left the family home in San Antonio, Texas, after an argument and was never seen again. But in 1997 a 23-year-old Frenchman, Frédéric Bourdin, accessed details of Nicholas's case while pretending to be a lost, traumatised teenager in a Spanish children's home. Desperate for a new start in life, Bourdin confirmed his identity as Nicholas Barclay, and the boy's sister Carey travelled to Spain to meet him. Convinced that he was her brother, horrifically changed by the traumas of long-term abuse and torture, she took him home to Texas, where he embarked on a series of increasingly desperate attempts to continue the deception. Via interviews with Bourdin, family members, officials and investigators, as well as dramatic reconstructions of key scenes, the film weaves together the opposing viewpoints of those involved.

When Bourdin was finally unmasked as an imposter, he accused Nicholas's uncle – a drug addict, now dead – of having murdered the real Nicholas, and suggested that the other family members hoped to conceal the crime by playing along with his deception. The family continue to dismiss this allegation as another of Bourdin's lies. Bourdin has since served a prison sentence and has been revealed to be a serial imposter who has repeatedly impersonated much younger teenagers in an attempt to spend time in children's homes.



Another country: Ana Moreira and Carlotto Cotta as the young lovers in 'Tabu'

Tabu

Portugal/Germany/France 2012

Director: Miguel Gomes

Certificate 15 118m 13s

Reviewed by Trevor Johnston

See Feature
on page 24

The past is indeed a foreign country in this extraordinary third feature from Portugal's Miguel Gomes, which traces a unique filmic form to tell a story about vicarious living and bitter experience. Across two disparate segments we meet a seemingly dotty elderly woman and then see her secret African past played out almost as if it were an old movie, a singular unfolding that registers the psychological ripple effect of Portugal's colonial legacy while also conjuring a gauzy sense of Hollywood's far-off days of pith-helmeted adventure. The juxtapositions ping across emotional, historical and celluloid landscapes, yet *Tabu* is no glib mash-up straining only for superficial effect; its rich array of connections and ambiguities draws the viewer in, creating an allusive yet human drama that's immersive and rewarding. Oh, and it's just beautiful. Academy ratio, no less. Black and white in both 35mm and 16mm stock. Grain you want to reach out and touch. No wonder Gomes is the talk of the festival circuit, since this highly original assemblage is so obviously the real deal.

Agreeably, the film also seems determined not to take itself too seriously, something that's

evident from the quirky colonial-era prologue, in which a 19th-century Portuguese explorer in safari gear traverses distant grasslands with native bearers in tow. Ostensibly his purpose is the further glory of God and king, but the voiceover reveals a more private truth – he's trying to put distance between himself and the image of his beloved late wife back home. Not too successfully either, as it turns out, since her unquiet spirit accompanies him. Indeed, even after he's committed suicide by throwing himself to a lurking crocodile, the ghost and the croc sit side by side on the riverbank, destinies entwined. "You cannot escape your heart," the apparition warns us, setting a thematic agenda for the rest of the proceedings, where outward behaviour will often seem at odds with individual emotional imperatives.

That's certainly the case in the first-up present-day Lisbon section of the story, which



Above: Telmo Churro in the film's prologue

Gomes titles 'Paradise Lost'. Pilar (Teresa Madruga), a middle-aged spinster, deals with her loneliness by concerning herself with the plight of her elderly neighbour Aurora (Laura Soveral), who may be in the early stages of dementia and is convinced that her black maid Santa (Isabel Cardoso) is using witchcraft against her. A magnificent nocturnal shot of Pilar tells us everything about this woman – as she stands on her apartment balcony a fringe of light silhouettes an otherwise pitch-black profile, suggesting a truly hollow individual. Professionally, she works as a human-rights lawyer investigating third-world injustices, again hinting at someone turning their focus on far-off climes to escape their everyday sufferings closer to home. Given that Portugal was the last of the European nations to relinquish its grip on its former African territories, are we to assume that the very notion of looking geographically outwards for self-definition is still somehow ingrained in the national consciousness?

Aurora, the representative of an earlier generation, is revealed in the course of the story to be even more marked by her time in Africa. At first her patronising attitudes to her servant offer up a reminder of the bad old days, but in the second section of the film – portentously dubbed 'Paradise' – the revelation of her personal history shows her own early 1960s colonial experience as a liberation from the moral strictures of bourgeois convention. The taboo that's broken here is the sanctity of marriage, as the younger Aurora (Ana Moreira) dallies with the rakish

Gianluca (Carloto Cotta), who lives on property neighbouring her husband's tea plantation, their initial assignation facilitated, significantly no doubt, by the timely escape of her pet crocodile. Ensuing events take the mood in the direction of florid melodrama, expressively (and in temporal and geographic terms) a world away from the constricted, somewhat doomy austerity of the Lisbon opener.

As Gomes indicated in his splendid breakthrough feature *Our Beloved Month of August* (2008), he's a man for a bit of bifurcation. In that instance, there was a magical moment of transition between factual and fictional registers, when what seemed to be a documentary about a shambling rural film shoot elided into a romantic drama in which the real people we'd met on location played versions of themselves. This time round, at about the halfway mark, the story shifts into what we initially read as a flashback to Aurora's rather scarlet past, but there's also a startling formal transformation to underline the point. While Pilar's sufferings are laid out with an almost anonymous severity, cut to the young Aurora in Africa and we're in another cinephile universe, a sort of netherworld between the silent and sound eras, where the elderly Gianluca's exquisitely literary voiceover shapes the telling of events. What's more, although we can hear the background ambience and music, the individuals' dialogue is reduced to silence – an effect richly evocative yet at the same time disorienting.

At this point one's critical duty is to trot out the Murnau references inherent in the film's title (Murnau and Robert Flaherty's jointly authored 1931 South Seas saga of the same name) and elsewhere (we even visit the Sunrise old folks' home), although the substance of what we see is rather more redolent of any number of exotic tales from golden-age Hollywood, from 1930s fare such as *Trader Horn* and the Weissmuller *Tarzan*



Above: Pilar (Teresa Madruga) and her friend the painter (Cândido Ferreira)

flicks through the decades to the likes of *Mogambo* (1953). Moreover, while it's true to say that the Academy-ratio framing and ace cinematographer Rui Poças's deliciously grainy 16mm black and white proclaim a certain vintage quality, the sundry tracking shots, moments of slow motion and flashes

Oh, and it's just beautiful. Academy ratio, no less. Black and white in both 35mm and 16mm stock. Grain you want to reach out and touch

of nudity all speak in a cinematic language that's much more modern. A composite of cinema and memory, perhaps? Maybe even the movie that's playing in Pilar's head? After all, we know she's listening to Gianluca tell his and Aurora's story, we've already witnessed her crying at the pictures, and there's a certain music cue (a kitsch Euro-cover of Phil Spector's 'Be My Baby') linking both sections of the film.

On a first viewing this cross-referencing is undeniably dizzying, even as we wallow in just so many moments of sheer pictorial beauty (especially in the brilliantly cast segment 'Paradise', where co-stars Moreira and Cotta really do look as if they've just wandered off the RKO backlot). Daringly, Gomes leaves us to make the connections that will not only complete the story – will Pilar be a changed woman, knowing how Aurora remained to some extent a prisoner of her past? – but also tease out its many thematic implications, yet that seeming lack of resolution is absolutely central to the intoxicating sense of textural and textual richness this remarkable film presents to us. Experts in Portuguese national cinema will no doubt find points of contact with the likes of Manoel de Oliveira and Pedro Costa, for so long the country's international standard bearers, but at the risk of making a sweeping generalisation, the quintessentially Portuguese notion of *saudade* – that longing for a return to a lost happiness which can never be regained – surely offers an entry point to *Tabu's* historical, cultural and emotional labyrinth.

Old Hollywood, the colonial era, Phil Spector's wall-of-sound mono heartbreakers, Academy-ratio black and white... What are they all but emblems of that which is gone forever? The past isn't just a foreign country in this instance; it's an old movie, a period pop song, the passions of youth. And it can only return in the mists of longing and memory, those refractions shaped by emotional need, which continue to envelop and inform lives such as Pilar's and Aurora's. Lives perhaps – *Tabu* tantalisingly poses the question – more like our own than we'd care to admit?

Credits

Producers

Luis Urbano
Sandro Aguilár

Screenplay

Miguel Gomes
Mariana Ricardo

Director of Photography

Rui Poças

Editors

Telmo Churro
Miguel Gomes

Art Director

Bruno Duarte
Sound

Costumes

Silvia Grabowski

©O Som e a Fúria,
Komplizen Film,
Gullane, Shellac Sud

Production Companies

O Som e a Fúria
presents in
co-production with
Komplizen Film,
Gullane, Shellac
Sud, ZDF/Arte a film
by Miguel Gomes
Supported by
Instituto do Cinema
e do Audiovisual,
Ancine - Agência
Nacional do Cinema,
Filmförderung

Hamburg
Schleswig-Holstein
With the participation
of Centre national
du cinéma et de
l'image animée

Produced with the
support of Programa
Ibermedia

Developed with the
support of MEDIA and
with the participation
of ZDF/Arte, RTP

Executive Producer
Luis Urbano

Central Committee
Mariana Ricardo
Miguel Gomes
Bruno Lourenço
Telmo Churro

Cast
Teresa Madruga
Pilar

Laura Soveral
Aurora

Cast

Ana Moreira
young Aurora
Henrique
Espírito Santo
Cian Luca Ventura
Carloto Cotta
young Gian
Luca Ventura
Isabel Cardoso
Santa

Ivo Müller
Aurora's husband
Manuel Mesquita
Mário

Telmo Churro
intrepid explorer
Miguel Gomes
narrator

Cândido Ferreira
the painter

Dolby Digital
In Colour
[1.37:1]

Subtitles

Distributor
New Wave Films

10,639ft + 8 frames

Synopsis

A Portuguese colony in Africa, the 19th century. An intrepid explorer traverses the grasslands, hoping to escape the memory of his late wife back home. Her ghostly form appears, prompting him to commit suicide by throwing himself to a crocodile.

'Paradise Lost'. Present-day Lisbon. Lonely middle-aged Christian spinster Pilar, a human-rights activist, is concerned about her eccentric elderly neighbour Aurora, who accuses her stoic black maid Santa of witchcraft and claims to have blood on her hands from past misdeeds. Unable to respond to declarations of affection from a male artist friend, Pilar spends New Year alone. A deteriorating Aurora is subsequently hospitalised; she charges Pilar with fetching one Gianluca Ventura from an old folks' home. Aurora dies before she can be reunited with Gianluca, but he tells their story.

'Paradise'. Over images silent but for background ambience, songs and Gianluca's literary narration, a tragic love story unfolds. In an unnamed Portuguese African colony, circa 1960, Aurora marries a successful Portuguese tea planter and is pregnant with their first child when she falls for their neighbour, the handsome Gianluca. Her pet crocodile wanders on to his property; she follows, and a torrid affair begins. They elope in the last month of her pregnancy. Gianluca's faithful friend Mario confronts him, and is shot by Aurora, who goes into labour. Gianluca summons her husband, who rescues his wife and newborn daughter. Although both lovers spend their later years in Lisbon, they never meet, and their shared history has remained a secret.

Ai Weiwei Never Sorry

USA 2012

Director: Alison Klayman

Certificate 15 91m 3s

Reviewed by Michael Brooke

By some distance the most internationally famous Chinese contemporary artist, Ai Weiwei (b. 1957) has been increasingly portrayed as a latterday Václav Havel or Alexander Solzhenitsyn, whose names also became synonymous with political dissidence and whose activism fuelled their creative work. Indeed, in May this year Ai was one of the first winners of the posthumously inaugurated Havel Prize for Creative Dissent, and the Chinese authorities are unlikely to have been amused by the fact that the award deliberately resembled the 'Goddess of Democracy', the makeshift statue erected by pro-democracy protesters in Tiananmen Square in 1989.

But as Alison Klayman's documentary extensively demonstrates, Ai has long delighted in giving the finger to the Chinese government, often via philosophical tweets such as: "There are no outdoor sports as graceful as throwing stones at a dictatorship." Ai the prankster turns the government CCTV cameras trained permanently on his studio into marble-effect sculptures resembling hi-tech gargoyles, while Ai the activist takes care to document every stage of his attempts at filing a complaint against the police over an assault that saw him briefly hospitalised.

American-born China-based journalist Klayman filmed Ai regularly between 2009 and 2011, a few months after he caused an international stir by condemning the Beijing Olympics held in the 'bird's nest' stadium that he himself helped to design. Although the film usefully delves into his past to bring newcomers up to speed (including an info-nugget of particular *S&S* interest: he initially studied at the Beijing Film Academy alongside Chen Kaige, Zhang Yimou and other great 'fifth generation' filmmakers), it devotes most screen time to his then-current projects.

He's shown preparing large-scale shows in Munich (2009) and London (2010, the famous 'Sunflower Seeds' installation in Tate Modern's Turbine Hall) and working on an ongoing project to document the thousands of school-age victims of the 2008 Sichuan earthquake. The latter takes many forms, from the sociological (using crowd-sourcing techniques both to gather data on the ground and verbally commemorate individual victims) to the spectacular (a gigantic Munich installation in which 9,000 small rucksacks like those found in the rubble of collapsed



Seeds of change: Ai Weiwei

schools were mounted and colour-coordinated to spell out "She lived happily on this earth for seven years" in Chinese characters).

Ai's career has already fuelled a high-profile BBC documentary, *Ai Weiwei: Without Fear or Favour* (2010), and there are several overlaps in content, though Klayman's film benefits from much more extensive access to Ai himself, as well as several caught-on-the-wing encounters with officialdom – a memorable highlight involves Ai filming policemen who are in turn filming him having a restaurant meal. Klayman also pays much attention to Ai's extensive use of social media in general and Twitter in particular, and the role that they play in broadcasting his power-mocking stunts worldwide. She was lucky with her timing: her film was in post-production when Ai's 81-day disappearance in 2011 (ostensibly over tax anomalies) became a major international scandal, supplying her with a far more potent ending than the authorities' previous wing-clipping efforts, which had included low-level persecution, police assault and the demolition of his Shanghai studio.

Ai claims that his life and work have become inseparable, and Klayman seems to accept this largely uncritically: though she touches on Ai's unorthodox domestic arrangements whereby he's raising a son conceived outside his marriage to fellow artist Lu Qing, she rarely probes too deeply. Similarly, the film superficially skims several fascinating topics, not least the complexity of western-Chinese relations at a time when power balances are decisively shifting. However, the film's accessibility and immediacy make up for any analytical shortcomings, especially given the increased need for others to speak on Ai's behalf as the authorities devise yet more ways of silencing him.

The Amazing Spider-Man

USA 2012

Director: Marc Webb

Certificate 12A 136m 7s

Reviewed by Matthew Taylor

It's just ten years since Stan Lee and Steve Ditko's genetically modified crimefighter finally overcame decades of tortuous development to debut on the big screen. For many, Sam Raimi's first two *Spider-Man* films remain in the upper echelons of comic-book adaptations – on a par with Christopher Nolan's no-nonsense overhaul of *Batman*, Bryan Singer's punchy *X-Men* double and, more recently, Joss Whedon's *Avengers Assemble*. Raimi's five-year tenure delivered an acclaimed origin story and a sequel widely embraced as a genre benchmark, before sagging with a bloated, overcrowded third instalment beset by whispers of its director's creative control being squeezed (crowds flocked nonetheless). Some consternation thus ensued when Sony scrapped plans for a fourth film, bade farewell to Raimi and star Tobey Maguire, and opted to start again from scratch. Mercifully, though, pressing the reset button appears to have paid dividends: *The Amazing Spider-Man* arguably represents the most lithe, vital and emotionally potent rendering of the superhero to date.

While it's impossible to suppress feelings of déjà vu as familiar elements are reconstituted, the new film is notable for its bold excisions and shrewd tweaks to character histories. Alter ego Peter Parker remains a nerdy student who lives with his Uncle Ben and Aunt May, but – as superbly played by Andrew Garfield – he's some distance from Maguire's perpetually dumbfounded geek. Diffident and twitchy, Peter carries a deep-seated fury at his parents' sudden abandonment of him as a child, glimpsed in a mysterious prologue. Childhood sweetheart Mary Jane, a dominant presence in the Raimi trilogy, makes way for sassy boffin Gwen Stacy (Emma Stone). *The Daily Bugle*, and its truculent editor J. Jonah Jameson, are absent; Peter is still a keen photographer but, as the prominent *Rear Window* poster in his bedroom suggests, this is merely one facet of his overriding desire for knowledge. It's this compulsion that leads him to sneak into the lab of Dr Curt Connors (Rhys Ifans), a former colleague of Parker Sr at biotech monolith Oscorp, who is experimenting with reptilian DNA in tissue regeneration. One bite from a stray GM spider later and Peter, acquiring abnormal strength and reflexes, is soon sheepishly beating up thugs on the subway and clinging to skyscrapers.

Nolan's *Batman* refit demonstrated an almost puritanical zeal in its application of hard-edged realism to an oft-abused character. Not so here; there are darker shadings to Peter's psyche, and a potent sense of real danger and consequences, but *The Amazing Spider-Man*, occasionally precariously but on the whole nimbly, treads a tightrope between breezy levity and surprisingly affecting drama. Where the film does nod to *Batman Begins* is in its leisurely overture – it's almost an hour before we see Peter in full costume – and careful attention to its characters' inner demons. Lack and absence are recurring themes: Peter's gnawing need for answers about his parents; the fate suffered by Ben (Martin Sheen) that initiates Peter's vigilantism as Spider-Man; Connors's queasy

Credits

Producers
Alison Klayman
Adam Schlesinger
Filed by
Alison Klayman
Edited by
Jennifer Fineran
Music
Ilan Sakov
Sound
Alison Klayman

©Never Sorry LLC
Production Companies
United Expression

Media presents in association with MUSE Film and Television a film by Alison Klayman This film was supported by a grant from the Sundance Institute Documentary Film Program Completed with the support of a Liberty Grant from Chicken & Egg Pictures and a

Mobility Award from PUMACreative
Executive Producers
Karl Katz
Julie Goldman
Andrew Cohen

In Colour
[1.85:1]
Part-subtitled

Distributor
Artificial Eye Film Company

8,194 ft +8 frames

Synopsis

China, 2009-11. Artist Ai Weiwei supervises exhibitions in Munich and London as his art increasingly overlaps with his political activism, notably his commemoration of the 2008 Sichuan earthquake victims and his video documentation of his various complaints against the police (often published online).

The son of dissident poet Ai Qing, he lived in New York from 1983-93 before returning to China, since when he has regularly provoked the authorities. They initially react with low-level persecution, then imprison him between April and June 2011. After his release, Ai is banned from giving interviews but his international profile remains high.

The Bird

France 2011
Director: Yves Caumon

Reviewed by Henry K. Miller

In her 2003 book *Cinema's Missing Children*, Emma Wilson writes that the missing child, "one of the central fears and compulsions" of recent art cinema, poses "questions about the protection and innocence of childhood, about parenthood and the family, about the past (as childhood is constructed in retrospect as nostalgic space of safety) and about the future (as fears for children reflect anxiety about the inheritance left to future generations)". Though belonging to the same genre as Kieslowski's *Three Colours Blue* (1993), Yves Caumon's *The Bird*, characterised by frequent and sometimes disorienting narrative ellipses, also elides these themes, making what Wilson calls "the impossibility of representation of such experience" its guiding aesthetic principle.

The cause of the grieving mother's trauma is revealed only a third or more of the way through, and even then it isn't made absolutely explicit. With one very brief exception near the end, *The Bird* unfolds in the present tense, and what happened in the dreadful past can only be inferred. Anne (Sandrine Kiberlain) is introduced in fragments – opening mail, showering, chopping vegetables, jogging, learning Portuguese – some of which become invested with meaning in retrospect. She has a fairly menial job in a large restaurant, and doesn't socialise with colleagues. When she bumps into an old friend it is made apparent that Anne has moved back to Bordeaux without telling anyone.

She rejects junior chef Raphael (Clément Sibony) when he makes a rather passive-aggressive pass at her – you clearly fancy me, is his gambit – but later picks up a stranger, Claude (Serge Riaboukine), who realises that something's up. Anne's evening with him is actually the only pleasurable experience we see her having, but she can't respond to him physically, and leaves abruptly. Raphael is a somewhat ambiguous figure: though obnoxious, he isn't entirely wrong about Anne; and, not seeing her in private, knows even less than the audience. When her friend says "Don't disappoint me" after they arrange to meet, there is the suggestion that not everything in Anne's behaviour derives from her grief.

At that point, however, the audience too is in the dark. The central revelation comes after a sequence at once heavily and obliquely symbolic. The titular bird lives somewhere in Anne's apartment building, keeping her up at night and, after her evening chez Claude, compelling her to smash a hole in her wall to let it in. It appears just as she hears a phone message, asking her to "take care of the flowers", that makes her drop her glass. (Apart from a scene in a cinema, when she cries at a Mizoguchi film, it is the first time she betrays much emotion.) A point-of-view shot from a car driving into the country follows directly, then Anne wordlessly giving the flowers to a man who must be her ex-husband Marc – "Don't make me feel guilty," he says. Finally we see him laying the flowers at a boy's grave, marked 2004-08.

The boy is never spoken of; his



The spider who loved me: Emma Stone, Andrew Garfield

ecstasy when he succeeds, albeit temporarily, in replacing his missing arm with a viscous phantom limb. Peter's romantic complications, meanwhile, have been effectively streamlined. In Raimi's take, Peter weathered a guilt-ridden love triangle; here, Gwen's fear of her policeman father (Denis Leary) being killed on duty makes her hesitate to fall for the equally danger-courting Spider-Man.

Marc Webb was an unlikely replacement for Raimi, his sole prior directing credit being 2009's temporally fractured romance (500) *Days of Summer*. But if Webb lacks Raimi's skewed vision and eye for oddball compositions, his spry, naturalistic handling is largely invigorating. Intimate scenes are given room to breathe, while the customary vertiginous action, shot crisply on the new RED

Epic camera, is surprisingly well orchestrated. When Connors is transformed into crazed humanoid reptile the Lizard and wreaks havoc on a gridlocked Williamsburg Bridge, the film can't fail to evoke *Godzilla*; dismissing Peter's fevered claims of a rampaging lizard on the loose, Leary quips, "Do I look like the mayor of Tokyo?" Yet another mad scientist brought low by hubris, Connors pales in comparison to Alfred Molina's memorable Doc Ock in *Spider-Man 2*, but Ifans's soulful interpretation adds tragic heft to his fallen man of scruples.

For all the positives, it's difficult to invest too much in Webb's film (and the inevitable sequels), given the fate of Raimi's trilogy. For now, though, the renewed sense of purpose and Garfield's potentially definitive turn should quell a few fears.

Credits

Produced by

Laura Ziskin
Avi Arad

Screenplay

James Vanderbilt
Alvin Sargent
Steve Kloves

Story

James Vanderbilt
Based on the Marvel comic book by Stan Lee and Steve Ditko

Director of Photography

John Schwartzman

Editors

Alan Edward Bell

Production Designer

J. Michael Riva

Music Composed by

James Horner

Sound Mixer

Douglas Axtell

Costume Designer

Kym Barrett

Special Visual Effects and Animation

Sony Pictures
Imageworks Inc.
Sony Pictures
Imageworks India
Visual Effects by
Pixomondo

©Columbia Pictures Industries, Inc.
Production Companies

Columbia Pictures presents a Marvel Entertainment, Laura Ziskin, Avi Arad, Matt Tolmach production

Executive Producers

Stan Lee
Kevin Feige
Michael Gillo

Cast

Andrew Garfield

Peter Parker, 'Spider-Man'

Emma Stone

Gwen Stacy

Rhys Ifans

Dr Curt Connors, 'The Lizard'

Denis Leary

Captain Stacy

Campbell Scott

Richard Parker

Irfan Khan

Rajit Ratha

Martin Sheen

Uncle Ben

Sally Field

Aunt May

Embeth Davidtz

Mary Parker

Chris Zylka

Flash Thompson

Max Charles

Peter Parker (age 4)

C. Thomas Howell

Jack's father

Dolby Digital/ DTS/SDDS

In Colour

[2.35:1]

Some screenings presented in 3D

Synopsis

New York City, the present. Raised by his Uncle Ben and Aunt May after the mysterious departure of his parents, Peter Parker is a teenage loner. Classmate Gwen Stacy – in her spare time an intern for Oscorp scientist Dr Curt Connors – becomes interested in him. Connors is tasked with developing a cure for Oscorp's ailing head Norman Osborn. Discovering that his father once worked alongside Connors, Peter sneaks into his lab, and is bitten by a genetically modified spider. He acquires superhuman strength and reflexes, and finds that he can emit spider webbing from his hands. Peter gives Connors his father's research, believing it holds the key to Connors's experiments in tissue regeneration. Ben, pursuing Peter into the city after a quarrel, is shot dead while tackling a store robber. Forging an identity-concealing suit, Peter hunts criminals who resemble Ben's killer, but the culprit proves elusive. Gwen's father, police captain George Stacy, declares 'Spider-Man' a vigilante menace. Peter reveals his secret to Gwen. Fired after refusing to test his new serum on humans, Connors instead tests it on himself and transforms into the Lizard, a malevolent humanoid reptile. When the Lizard wreaks havoc on a gridlocked bridge, Peter – as Spider-Man – averts tragedy. The Lizard, deducing Spider-Man's real identity, attacks Peter and Gwen at school. While evading police capture, Spider-Man is unmasked by Captain Stacy. The Lizard plots to send the serum airborne from the top of the Oscorp building. With Gwen's help, Spider-Man uses an antidote to neutralise the threat, and Connors regains human form. Mortally wounded by the Lizard, Captain Stacy makes Peter promise to stay away from Gwen. An enigmatic visitor asks the imprisoned Connors if Peter knows the truth about his father's fate.



Flight club: Sandrine Kiberlain

parents are no longer on speaking terms – Marc (Bruno Todeschini) has a new, pregnant partner Elise – and Anne confides in no one. But the bird is still there when she returns and, retreating from work, she begins to look after it. Even when Anne hangs a cage for it, the symbolism remains slightly obscure; likewise when it is killed – probably by a neighbour's cat, going by a Chekhovian mention a few reels earlier. Anne cremates it and scatters its ashes over the river Garonne, which the camera then follows down to the Atlantic coast, where Raphael has opened a new restaurant; and in the last scene Anne appears outside, exchanging a few unheard words with Raphael before the fade-out.

It is perhaps for Anne, rather than for the logic of the narrative, that the bird

and its movements take on meaning; and still that meaning, though obviously related to her mourning, is ineffable. She is uncharacteristically nonchalant when Marc tells her that Elise is soon due; but when she returns to find the bird gone she is equally unusually upset. Kiberlain, present in every shot, balances expressive small moments against a larger inscrutability. Nothing is put into words. The bird's death follows what appears to be Anne's own attempted suicide, in the same pond where her son died, and this second, almost parodic loss of a creature she had nurtured is apparently what prompts her to turn back towards human company – though how decisively we can't know. Though offering an ending of sorts, *The Bird* is necessarily provisional.

Credits

Producer
Bertrand Gore
Director of Photography
Céline Bozon
Editor
Sylvie Fauthoux
Art Director
Sophie Reynaud-Malouf
Music
Thierry Machuel
Sound
Dominique Lacour
Nicolas Becker
Jean-Marc Schick
Didier Catlin
Costume Designer
Marie Le Garrec

©Blue Monday
Productions/Arte
France Cinéma
Production Companies
Blue Monday
Productions present a Blue Monday
Productions/Arte
France Cinéma
co-production
A film by Yves
Caumon

With the participation of Canal+, Arte France, CinéCinéma, Centre National du Cinéma et de l'Image Animée
With the support of Région Aquitaine, Région Midi-Pyrénées in partnership with CNC
In association with Cinéma 5
Developed with the support of Procirep - Angoa and Cofinova
Développement
With the help of the CNC/
Région Aquitaine
Scriptwriting Aid
Film Extracts
The Life of Oharu/ Saikaku Ichidai Onna (1952)

Cast
Sandrine Kiberlain
Anne
Clément Sibony
Raphaël
Bruno Todeschini
Marc

Serge Riaboukine
Claude
Alice Belaidi
Latifa
Mirela Sofronea
Christina
Mathieu Salvat
Cédric
Benoît Rivière
cookery assistant
Roberto Carlos Sosa
Argentine client
Stéphanie
Cassignard
woman in cinema
Louise Caumon
Joseph Caumon
the children
Marianne Ploquin
Elise

Dolby Digital
In Colour
[L.66:1]
Subtitles

Distributor
Picturehouse

French theatrical title
L'Oiseau

Synopsis

Bordeaux, the present. Anne, a single woman of around 40, is kept awake by a flapping sound somewhere in her apartment building. By day she works in a large restaurant and keeps her distance from the rest of the staff, particularly chef Raphael, whose advances she rejects. After going to a repertory cinema she propositions a fellow cinephile, who half-reluctantly takes her home.

Anne calls in a handyman to discover the source of the noise – a bird – and knocks a hole in the wall to let it into her flat. Its arrival coincides with her receiving an upsetting phone invitation. She drives into the countryside and meets her ex-husband Marc and his new partner Elise. Anne gives Marc flowers and he lays them on their son's grave.

Anne leaves out food for the bird and puts up a cage. At work she contemptuously rejects Raphael's offer of a job at his new restaurant on the coast, then calls in sick. Raphael tracks her down and forces a kiss on her before leaving town. Anne and Marc sell their former home. Marc tells her that Elise is pregnant.

Later, Anne drives to the house they have just sold. She goes to a pond where her son died, and possibly attempts suicide before two teenagers interrupt her. At home she finds the bird dead, cremates it and scatters its ashes over the Garonne. At the river's mouth she appears at Raphael's restaurant, and they exchange words.

Bol Bachchan

India 2012
Director: Rohit Shetty
Certificate 12A 149m 37s

Reviewed by Naman Ramachandran

Rohit Shetty is best known for making loud, illogical action movies for the lowest common denominator. His comedies follow the same pattern. The one thing both genres have in common for Shetty is that the films are usually huge successes at the Bollywood box office, and *Bol Bachchan*, an uneasy attempt to fuse Shetty's pet genres, is already one of the biggest openers of 2012.

The film is an official remake of Hrishikesh Mukherjee's *Gol Maal* (1979), which is rightly hailed as one of Indian cinema's comedy classics, and which was remade in Tamil as *Thillu Mullu* in 1981. *Bol Bachchan* opens with the actor Amitabh Bachchan, as himself, saying: "I'm not in the film, only my name is here." Bachchan's son Abhishek Bachchan plays Abbas Ali, who, in order to fool his boss, calls himself Abhishek Bachchan.

The film references several of Bachchan Sr's hit movies, and the original *Gol Maal* is staged as a play and clips are played on television. Amid this welter of references, the basic premise of a man playing both himself and his fictitious gay twin is submerged, and Shetty shoe-horns in needless action sequences that reduce whatever little comedy is present and only add to the length and overall confusion.

Credits

Producer
Dhilin Mehta
Ajay Devgn
Screenplay
Yunus Sajawal
Dialogue
Farhad-Sajid
[i.e. Farhad Samji,
Sajid Samji]
Director of Photography
Dudley
Editor
Steven H. Bernard
Production Designer
Narendra Rahurikar
Music
Himesh Reshammiya
Ajay Gogavale
Atul Gogavale
Lyrics
Swanand Kirkire
Shabbir Ahmed
Farhad-Sajid

Sound
Rakesh Ranjan
Costumes
Alvira Agnihoti
Ashley Rebello

Production Companies
Fox STAR Studios
present an Ajay
Devgn Films, Shree
Ashtavinayak Cine
Vision production

Cast
Ajay Devgn
Prithviraj
Raghuvanshi
Abhishek Bachchan
Abbas Ali
Asin
Sania Bachchan
Prachi Desai
Radhika

Asrani
Shastri
Krishna Abhishek
Ravi
Archana Puran Singh
Krishna Abhishek
Neeraj Vora
Jeetu Verma
Harish Shetty

In Colour
[2.35:1]
Subtitles

Distributor
Fox Star

13,465 ft +8 frames

Synopsis

India, the present. Abbas Ali moves to Ranakpur with his sister Sania to take up employment with local chieftain Prithviraj Raghuvanshi, who despises lies and being lied to. On his first day in Ranakpur, Abbas sees a child fall into the pond of a Hindu temple that has been locked for years following a dispute. He breaks the lock and saves the child from drowning. His friend tells the gathered crowd that Abbas's name is Abhishek Bachchan – a Hindu name, in order to defuse tensions that might have been caused by a Muslim breaking into a Hindu temple. Prithviraj gives Abhishek a job. Due to circumstances, 'Abhishek' is also forced to pose as his own fictitious gay twin Abbas, and becomes increasingly drawn into a complicated fabric of lies. Prithviraj eventually finds out the truth and a confrontation ensues. Eventually, however, all is forgiven.

Brave

USA 2012

Directors: Mark Andrews, Brenda Chapman
Certificate PG 100m 24s

Reviewed by Thirza Wakefield

The vocal performances of Tim Allen and Tom Hanks in *Toy Story* (1995) and Ellen DeGeneres in *Finding Nemo* (2003) were more than half the life of toys and fish respectively. That's not the case with this latest offering from Disney/Pixar, a fairytale about gutsy Scottish princess Merida, who goes to great (and magical) lengths to dodge parental expectations, enlisting the help of a witch to alter her fate so that she can avoid following her mother into the married life of a feudal royal. For although Kelly Macdonald is a fiery fit for Merida, and Julie Walters's witch a dry and unique addition to Disney's hall of alchemist fame, *Brave* transcends the idiosyncrasies of its voice actors, and the skill and ingenuity of Pixar's computer animation take the lead here.

In 2001, Sulley's green-and-violet shag in *Monsters, Inc.* was celebrated as a marker of how far animation had come. *Brave* is another milestone, layering detail upon detail, with Merida's long red hair taking on a life of its own (Pixar patented a new hair-simulator especially) and countless, easy-to-miss subtleties – as minute as blueberries pitching gently, somehow sinisterly, on to a plate. Unprecedented attention to cinematography and overland tracking shots (fast becoming a staple of 3D filmmaking) reveal new fields of depth, as when Merida rides horseback through the Highlands in the magnificent opening sequence. Angus, her loyal Clydesdale, is a measure of the film's difference, being unlike other Disney horses – non-speaking, and with a naturalistic muscularity that's anti-anthropomorphic.

In its hocus-pocus village mythology, *Brave* is nostalgically mindful of the

Disney canon – *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (1937), *Sleeping Beauty* (1959) – but it's also a step in a new direction. *Brave* is less plain-dealing than its prototypes, for while Merida narrates the film's moral over a montage conclusion, its magic is far from reducible – it's never quite explained, for example, how the witch's spell is reversed. It's a new line for a family film, and characteristic of *Brave*'s originality, mixing bagpipe hyperbole with surprising understatement. Merida's triplet brothers entertain with their gravity-defying exploits, but they also know their mother implicitly as she towers above them, transformed into a bear.

With *Brave*, Pixar abandons the usual stratifying humour, the film's knowing, grown-up dialogue appealing to the eye-rolling just-teens who've lost out in the past to Pixar's conception of an audience of two halves: the very young and the placable adult. It's appropriate that a film about a would-be sophisticate takes aim at her kindred spirits – although there are moments when the script risks overshooting with cognoscenti gags that may elude even them.

But this is a small criticism of a film that hits the mark so consistently, balancing story and design with tremendous success. The Disney/Pixar team is scaling new heights of ambition, and if *Brave* – an immersive and complete work of cinema – isn't the peak, who knows what fun we're in for.



Archer departure: 'Brave'

Credits

Produced by

Katherine Sarafian
Screenplay
Mark Andrews
Steve Purcell
Brenda Chapman
Irene Mecchi

Story

Brenda Chapman
Directors of
Photography

Camera:

Robert Anderson
Lighting:
Danielle Feinberg

Film Editor

Nicholas C. Smith
Production Designer
Steve Pilcher

Original Score

Composed by
Patrick Doyle
Sound Designer
Gary Rydstrom

Supervising

Animators
Alan Barilaro
Steven Clay Hunter

©Disney Enterprises,

Inc./Pixar

Production

Companies

Disney presents

a Pixar Animation

Studios film

Executive Producers

John Lasseter

Andrew Stanton

Pete Docter

Voice Cast

Kelly Macdonald

Merida

Billy Connolly

Fergus

Emma Thompson

Elinor

Julie Walters

the witch

Robbie Coltrane

Lord Dingwall

Kevin McKidd

Lord MacGuffin

Craig Ferguson

Lord Macintosh

Sally Kinghorn

Eilidh Fraser

Maudie

Peigi Barker

young Merida

Kevin McKidd

young MacGuffin

Steven Cree

young Macintosh

Dolby Digital/

DataSound

In Colour

Prints by

DeLuxe

[2.35:1]

Distributor

Buena Vista

International (UK)

9,036 ft +0 frames

Synopsis

The Scottish Highlands, once upon a time. King Fergus loses his leg in a fight with a bear. The bear becomes a legend, known as Mor'du. Queen Elinor invites the three clans of the kingdom to each put forward a suitor to compete for the hand in marriage of her daughter Merida. In an archery competition, Merida competes for her own hand. After an argument with her mother, she slashes the family tapestry and flees into the woods. Will-o'-the-wisps lead her to a witch's cottage. She asks the witch to change her fate, and is given a magic cake. The witch has performed the spell before, for a prince who wished for the strength of ten men. Back at the castle, Elinor eats the cake and is turned into a bear. Mistaking her for Mor'du, Fergus orders a hunt. Mother and daughter escape into the forest, where they are attacked by Mor'du. Merida realises that Mor'du is the prince from the witch's story. They return to the castle so that Elinor can mend the tapestry, but she is seen by the king and pursued. Merida rides after, stitching the tear in the tapestry, and comes between Fergus and her mother just as the king is about to behead the latter. Mor'du arrives, and the two bears battle. A stone crushes Mor'du, and the spirit of the prince rises out of it. Merida lays the mended tapestry over her injured mother. The spell is broken and Elinor is human again.

Circumstance

USA/The Netherlands/France/Morocco/Hong Kong
2011, Director: Maryam Keshavarz

Reviewed by Sophie Mayer

Circumstance opens with words whispered in a girl's voice over a black screen: "Where would you be if you could be anywhere in the world?" At heart, the answer is 'with you', as Atafeh — the more worldly of the two friends murmuring this conversation while standing in line at a school assembly in Tehran — imagines watching her friend Shireen's singing talent and physical grace being revealed to the world, with her in the front row.

Atafeh and Shireen's bold relationship, across boundaries of class as well as cultural prohibition, is vividly and beautifully depicted in its blend of pleasures: not only sexual discovery and the piquancy of transgression, but the heady affective and physical delights of adolescent friendship. Music provides the focus, from that initial fantasy sequence to the girls miming to *American Idol* or singing along to queercore band Le Tigre in Atafeh's car. It's easy to see why the film attracted support from the fund founded in the name of American actor-director Adrienne Shelly, as it focuses not only on young women but on their powerful need for self-expression in the face of oppression.

The restrictions on women's behaviour, framed earlier in the film as tacitly cultural, are quickly embodied by Atafeh's brother Mehran. A recovering drug addict, he replaces one addiction with another when he joins the moral police based at the local mosque and starts spying on his family with CCTV cameras. While the film doesn't make use of surveillance in the way that Michael Haneke's *Hidden* (2005) did, or draw on the suggestive fixed camera as Abbas Kiarostami did in *Ten* (2002), it contrasts Mehran's controlling voyeurism with the power of cinema and media to liberate.

Shireen and Atafeh become friends with local party guy Joey and his American cousin Hossein, who persuades the girls to help him dub *Milk* into Farsi. In a hidden video store, Hossein argues that Gus Van Sant's film offers a model of non-violent protest that could inspire Iranian youth, but the girls and Joey are more concerned with sexual freedom, declaring, "Fucking's a human right." Atafeh cannily suggests dubbing episodes of *Sex and the City* and adding *Milk* on the same DVD.

In many ways, Atafeh's vision is the film's model, as the opening fantasy sequence suggests: Shireen's dance, in a slinky outfit, is eventually revealed to be intended for Atafeh's gaze, but the framing is conventionally seductive. This tension between conventional framing and radical desire characterises the whole film, though its commitment to family melodrama eventually leads it to become bogged down in Mehran's deus-ex machinations, which are at once stereotypical and barely believable. It doesn't help that the film's 'when we run away' fantasy sequences awkwardly evoke the highly stylised — and highly commodified — world of TV's *The L Word*.

The film delivers a charged and liberatory vision of sexuality, thanks to the confident direction of Maryam Keshavarz and the accomplished performances of



Kick against the pricks: Boosheri, Kazemy

 Nikohl Boosheri and Sarah Kazemy. Hemmed in, however, by its faith in *Sex & the City*, it can't quite dub *Milk*'s serious, affective and activist negotiations between the personal and the political into Farsi.

Credits

Producer

Karin Chien
Maryam Keshavarz
Melissa M. Lee

Written by

Maryam Keshavarz

Director of

Photography

Brian Rigney

Editor

Andrea Chignoli

Production

Designer

Natacha Kalfayan

Composer

Ginger Shankar

Production

Sound Mixer

Michael Gassert

Costume Designer

Lamia Choucair

©Circumstance, LLC.

Production

Companies

Participant

Media, Roadside

Attractions presents

in association with

Hubert Bals Fund

a Marrakesh Films,

A Space Between,

Bago Pictures and

Neon Productions

production

With the

participation of

Fonds Sud Cinema,

Minister of Culture

+ Communications

CNC, Minister for

European Affairs

and Foreign Affairs.

Cast

Nikohl Boosheri

Atafeh Hakimi

Sarah Kazemy

Shireen Arshadi

Reza Sixo Safai

Mehran Hakimi

Sohell Parsa

Fiروز Hakimi

Nasrin Pakkho

Zara Hakimi

Sina Amedson

Hossein

Keon Mohajeri

Joey

Amir Barghasi

Mohammed Mehdi

Fariborz Daftari

Shireen's uncle

Amir Soleimani

Payam

Siro Fazlian

Shireen's

grandmother

In Colour

[2.35:1]

Part-subtitled

Distributor

Peccadillo

Pictures Ltd

The Devil's Business

United Kingdom 2011

Director: Sean Hogan

Certificate 18 69m 29s

Reviewed by Philip Kemp

"The ending of *Faust* is such a bore," remarks suave diabolist Mr Kist, just before he's shot through the head – not that the shooting seems to incommode him very much. The ending of *The Devil's Business* can't be called a bore, though its conventionally blood-boltered climax does come as quite a letdown after the understated creepiness of what's preceded it. As with his 2005 feature debut *Lie Still* (aka *The Haunting of #24*), writer-director Sean Hogan largely relies on lighting, camera moves (mostly handheld) and a quiet, conversational tone to build his mood of eerie foreboding. As two hitmen wait for their victim, the older of the pair, Pinner (Billy Clarke), starts to recount a story, and his wide, unblinking eyes and soft Belfast accent tell us that there are depths of it he's concealing.

Likewise when Pinner later confronts his intended victim, Mr Kist (Jonathan Hansler), all we see are two men sitting in chairs sharing a drink and talking quietly – even if one of them has a bullet wound that exits through his eyeball. Occasionally the dialogue turns over-explicit – "Not only is the universe stranger than you imagine," Kist tells Pinner, "it's stranger than you can imagine" – but for the most part it's the lack of any routine horror elements that gives the scene its impact. As in *Lie Still*, the cool, implacable spirit of M.R. James hovers over much of the film – although the basic plot and the tone of the dialogue derive unmistakably from Harold Pinter's classic two-hander *The Dumb Waiter*, with the name of the lead character chosen in grateful homage.

Hogan makes such effective use of his micro-budget resources – a cast of four, a single location (producer Jennifer Handorf's in-laws' house, apparently) – that the film's final descent into horror-movie cliché, with a clumsy rip-off of *Don't Look Now* and a monster in a ludicrous Halloween mask, feels all the more disappointing. It comes across as a loss of nerve, as if the director feared his audience had to be compensated for the quiet, conversational tone of the preceding scenes with some overripe scream-fodder. If he can hold true to his subtler instincts next time round, Hogan could bring something exceptional to the British horror-movie tradition.

Credits

Produced by

Jennifer Handorf

Written by

Sean Hogan

Director of

Photography

Nicola Marsh

Edited by

Emma Gaffney

Sean Hogan

Production

Designer

Rosanna Fenner

Music

Justin Greaves

Sound Recordist

Nick Chetham

Costume Designer

Johan D. Feigh

©SSH Films Ltd.

Production

Company

A SSH Films

production

Executive

Producers

Jennifer Handorf

Miriam Handorf

Sean Hogan

Jay Slater

Cast

Billy Clarke

Pinner

Jack Gordon

Cully

Jonathan Hansler

Kist

Harry Miller

Bruno

Mark Sealey

homunculus

In Colour

[2.35:1]

Distributor

Metrodome

Distribution

6,253 ft +8 frames

Synopsis

Present-day England. Two hitmen – the older and experienced Pinner and nervous young novice Cully – are sent by their boss, club-owner Bruno, to kill his former associate Mr Kist. While they wait for Kist to return home, Cully irritates Pinner with naive questions. To shut him up, Pinner tells him of a strange series of events that happened at one of Bruno's clubs. He's interrupted by a sudden noise. Investigating, the two men find black-magic paraphernalia and a dead baby in a garden shed. Unnerved, Cully goes to the lavatory. While he's there, Kist returns and Pinner shoots him dead. The two hitmen head for the car, but Cully has left his watch in the bathroom. He insists that Pinner accompany him while he retrieves it.

Back in the house they find that Kist's body has vanished. While Cully keeps watch, Pinner goes to phone Bruno. On his return Cully accidentally shoots him in the shoulder. As Pinner is binding his wound, Cully sees a man outside. They search the shed; the door slams, trapping Cully inside. When it finally reopens, Cully has been reduced to a heap of bones and intestines. Back in the house, Pinner finds Kist, shot through the eye but alive and seemingly unconcerned. He offers Pinner a drink and they talk. Pinner, increasingly spooked, tries to shoot Kist again but his chair is empty.

Pinner discovers a trapdoor to the cellar, where he finds what seems to be a small boy. It proves to be a hideous homunculus who tears his throat out. Kist watches Pinner die, then phones Bruno and kills him with his voice. Taking the homunculus by the hand he leads it upstairs, telling it a bedtime story.



To the devil a slaughter: Jack Gordon

Tehran, the present. Shireen and Atafeh, students at a private girls' school, are best friends despite a significant class difference: Shireen lives in a tumbledown apartment with her grandmother and uncle and struggles to pay her school fees; Atafeh is the daughter of a professor and surgeon who represent the liberal Iranian elite. The girls' friendship progresses from flirtation to sex. Hossein, cousin of their friend Joey, arrives from the US and enlists their help in dubbing 'Sex and the City' and 'Milk' into Farsi. Atafeh's brother Mehran joins a secretive surveillance organisation based at the mosque, pushing Atafeh into daring engagement with the westernised underground clubbing scene. Mehran's surveillance leads to the arrest of the girls and Hossein; the latter is accused of being a spy. Mehran buys Shireen's escape in order to manoeuvre her into marriage. After the wedding, Shireen continues her relationship with Atafeh, leading to a confrontation with Mehran, who has been monitoring their home via CCTV. Atafeh, scared by Mehran's religiosity and his violence towards Shireen, plans their escape – but we see only Atafeh in the taxi driving out of Tehran.

The Dinosaur Project

United Kingdom/South Africa/Luxembourg 2012
Director: Sid Bennett
Certificate 12A 82m 48s

Reviewed by Anton Bitel

The digital era is also the new age of the dinosaur. After Steven Spielberg got the ball rolling with *Jurassic Park* in 1993, Peter Jackson had photoreal CG dinosaurs stampeding across his 2005 *King Kong* remake, showcasing just how far the technology had advanced since Merian C. Cooper's 1933 stop-motion original. Now Sid Bennett, director of ITV's *Prehistoric Park* (2006), has joined forces with Jellyfish Pictures, the effects house behind the BBC's *Planet Dinosaur* (2011), to create *The Dinosaur Project*.

The film combines all the expected visual digi-verisimilitude and familiar narrative motifs (portals, lost worlds, predatory peril) of its predecessors, but it avoids merely falling in their giant footprints by presenting itself as 'found footage' recorded by a party of explorers lost in the Jurassic jungle while searching for a gigantic Congolese cryptid. The faux reportage that seemed so innovative in *The Blair Witch Project* (1999) – to which this film's title clearly alludes – may since have approached extinction as a convincing medium for horror, but it makes sense in the context of a cryptozoological expedition, both because it matches the blurry handheld footage commonly associated with the likes of Bigfoot and Nessie, and because the characters are well motivated to keep the cameras running in the face of danger. Still, this being a largely good-natured family film, the cameras are turned discreetly aside whenever atavistic monsters (including pterodactyls, a pliosaur and some terrifying prehistoric bats) kill anyone, and there's plenty of humour and knowing corniness to offset the heightened realism of the camerawork. Somehow, just knowing that one of the characters has brought a set of Dinosaur Trump Cards reduces these creatures, for all their hulking immediacy, to a collector's vivid playthings.

The dinosaurs form the symbolic backdrop to a drama played out between father and son. Where celebrated cryptozoologist Jonathan

Marchant (Richard Dillane) is a throwback to the sort of old-style authoritarian adventurers found in Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's *The Lost World*, his estranged 15-year-old son Luke (Matt Kane), with his technological nous and rebellious spirit, is very much a figure of progress. So it's only natural that these two diametrically opposed characters – the fossil and the future – should at last be reconciled in a place where prehistory meets present day.

So, like *Jurassic Park*, *Night at the Museum* (2006) and *Journey to the Center of the Earth* (2008) before it, *The Dinosaur Project* sets the generational divide in a world of enduring dinosaurs – only, in this old-fashioned boy's own adventure (with a modern digicam twist), the creatures are the big stars, even taking over the filming at one point, while the altogether less distinctively 'rendered' live-action characters remain in their shadow.



Do you think he saw us?: Peter Brooke

Credits

Produced by

Nick Hill

Written by

Sid Bennett

Co-written by

Jay Basu

Based on a story

by Sid Bennett,

Tom Pridham

Director of

Photography

Tom Pridham

Film Editor

Ben Lester

Production Designer

Franz Lewis

End Title Original

Music

Richard Blair-Oliphant

Production

Sound Mixer

Dieter Keck

Costume Designer

Joanne Walter

Visual Effects

Jellyfish Pictures

©Dinosaur

Productions Limited/

Moonlighting Dino

Productions CC

Production

Companies

A Studiocanal

presentation of a Kent

Films production

A Dinosaur

Productions/

Moonlighting

Dino Productions

co-production

In association

with Anton Capital

Entertainment,

S.C.A. and Lovefilm

Developed with

the assistance of

Studiocanal Limited

Produced with the

assistance of the

Department of

Trade and Industry

South Africa

Executive Producers

Jenny Borgars

Danny Perkins

Richard Kuttner

Cast

Abena Ayivor

Amara

Peter Brooke

Charlie Rutherford

Richard Dillane

Jonathan Marchant

Stephen Jennings

Dave Moore

Matthew Kane

Luke Marchant

Natasha Loring

Liz Draper

André Weideman

Pete Van Aarde

Sivu Nobongoza

Etienne

Dolby Digital

In Colour

[2.35:1]

Distributor

Studiocanal Limited

7,452 ft +0 frames

Synopsis

Congo, present day. Sightings of a plesiosaur-like creature draw cryptozoologist Jonathan Marchant and an expeditionary team comprising assistant Charlie, medic Liz, television crew Dave and Pete, conservationist Amara and helicopter pilot Etienne. Jonathan's estranged 15-year-old son Luke stows away with them. When their helicopter is downed by giant flying creatures and Etienne is killed, the survivors spend the night in an abandoned village. Liz is overcame by giant prehistoric bats, but the others escape in rowing boats. They encounter three young dinosaurs; Luke befriends one of them, nicknaming him 'Crypto'. Attaching a mini-camera to Crypto, Luke and Charlie monitor the creature's path through a river cave, then down a hole. As the party row downriver, Charlie and Luke are pulled through the cave into a deep-water ravine. Dave is devoured by a pliosaur. Charlie leads Luke to the hole and pushes him down, hoping to kill everyone so that he can take sole credit for their discoveries. Luke survives, and is joined by Jonathan and Pete as more bats attack. Jonathan is driven over a cliff by Charlie, who is devoured by Crypto's parents. Luke sends a backpack containing the cameras' hard drives downriver (they are picked up by boatmen) and heads into the valley where his father fell.

A Few Best Men

Australia/USA/United Kingdom 2011
Director: Stephan Elliott
Certificate 15 96m 29s

Reviewed by Michael Brooke

The British wood-stain manufacturer Ronseal famously promised that its product "does exactly what it says on the tin". Since it's clear from the marketing that *A Few Best Men* is a shameless Anglo-Australian attempt to cash in on the runaway success of *The Hangover* (2009), one would have every reason to expect a raucously unsubtle and deeply puerile comedy exploiting the countless stereotypes that the Poms and the Aussies have constructed about each other – and that's exactly what you get.

Fortunately, like its role model, *A Few Best Men* is often very funny almost despite itself. In his 2007 film *Death at a Funeral*, screenwriter Dean Craig showed a fondness for manipulating large ensemble casts into awkward situations via the application of agreeably old-fashioned farce mechanics. Here he's merely shifted the central event from an English country funeral to an alarmingly lavish Sydney wedding, where British friends David, Tom, Graham and Luke arrive unaware that David is marrying into the down-under equivalent of the Kennedy clan: during his whirlwind holiday romance with Mia, she forgot to mention it.

Naturally, everything goes horribly wrong, with Craig planting comedic bomblets at regular intervals for later detonation at the most embarrassingly inopportune moments. When Jim Ramme, Mia's politician father, reveals that he keeps a large ram in a pen for photo-opportunity purposes ('The Ram Behind the Man'), it's a given that it will play a major and often deeply undignified role in the proceedings. Similarly, when Graham steps up to deliver the best man's speech at short notice, we've been well prepared for the likelihood that his 'script' might merely consist of a crude drawing of a pair of breasts.

As the cheerfully irresponsible Tom and the desperately square Graham, Kris Marshall (who played a similar reprobate in *Death at a Funeral*) and Kevin Bishop form the film's strongest double act, with support from Jonathan Biggins's endlessly schmoozing and shamelessly opportunist Jim and especially Steve Le Marquand's drug dealer Ray, whose various psychological problems are encapsulated by a tattoo that he describes as "a little kid crying and his bastard parents leaving him for dead". As Mia's black-sheep sister Daphne, Rebel Wilson attempts to repeat her scene-stealing antics in *Bridesmaids*, with some success at first ("You look like a really beautiful meringue," she helpfully tells Mia), until Olivia Newton-John comes



Waiting for my ram: Kris Marshall, Kevin Bishop

into her own as her mother Barbara, a classic political wife trained to take even the most unpredictable behaviour in her stride: the impression that her British guests are heavily into BDSM leaves her unruffled. But a mid-point encounter with Ray's cocaine stash brings decades of carefully constructed professional slickness crashing down.

Director Stephan Elliott juggles the various narrative balls efficiently enough, though it's unlikely that *A Few Best Men* will be remembered as fondly 18 years hence as his earlier *The Adventures of Priscilla Queen of the Desert* still is today.

Credits

Produced by
Share Stallings
Laurence Malkin
Gary Hamilton
Antonia Barnard
Written by
Dean Craig
Director of Photography
Stephen Windon
Editor
Sue Blaine
Production Designer
George Liddle
Composer
Guy Gross
Sound Recordist
David Lee
Costume Designer
Lizzy Gardiner

© Screen Australia, Screen NSW and A Few Best Men Pty Ltd
Production Companies
Screen Australia, Arclight Films and Quickfire Films and Screen NSW present a Parabolic

Pictures and Stable Way Entertainment production in association with Unthank Films and Story Bridge Films and Ingenious Broadcasting and Auburn Entertainment Co-produced by Ingenious Broadcasting and Auburn Entertainment
Financed with assistance from Screen NSW and its Regional Filming Fund
Principal investor: Screen Australia
Executive Producers
Dean Craig
Josh Kesselman
Todd Fellman
Mark Lindsay
Ian Gibbins
James Atherton
James M Vernon

Cast
Xavier Samuel
David Kris Marshall
Tom Kevin Bishop
Graham Laura Brent
Mia Tim Draxl
Luke Rebel Wilson
Daphne Steve Le Marquand
Ray Jonathan Biggins
Jim Ramme
Olivia Newton-John
Barbara

In Colour
[2.35:1]

Distributor
Buena Vista International (UK)

8,683 ft +8 frames

Synopsis

London, the present. British backpacker David tells friends Tom, Graham and Luke that he's marrying his holiday girlfriend Mia in her native Sydney and that they're invited. En route from the airport, Tom and Graham visit Ray, a drug dealer, to get stag-night supplies. David is unsettled to discover that Mia is the daughter of high-profile senator Jim Ramme. After the stag night the quartet wake up alongside Jim's mascot Ramsay (a ram), who is wearing makeup and women's undergarments. Graham discovers that a bag mix-up has left him with Ray's cocaine stash. The recently dumped Luke has a champagne-fuelled breakdown, causing extensive destruction during the marriage ceremony. Graham replaces him as best man. Tom suggests cocaine as a confidence-booster; Mia's mother Barbara catches them and demands some herself. Graham improvises a sexually explicit speech. Hoping to salvage matters, Jim decides to unveil Ramsay ahead of schedule but discovers that he's missing. Tom and Graham find that Ramsay has eaten all the cocaine-filled condoms, which they retrieve manually after feeding him laxatives. Ramsay is successfully returned with no sign of injury. Tom attempts to show the guests David's homemade romantic video but instead accidentally screens mobile-phone footage of what happened to Ramsay the night before. A shotgun-toting Ray crashes the party but is recognised by the police commissioner, his long-lost father. The wedding is cancelled. David plays Mia his video and they are reconciled.

The Forgiveness of Blood

Italy/Denmark/USA/Albania 2010

Director: Joshua Marston



Feud poisoning: Tristan Halilaj

Reviewed by Wally Hammond

Spoiler Alert
Co-developed by American writer-director Joshua Marston (whose 2004 debut was the well-received *Maria Full of Grace*) and Albanian filmmaker Andamion Murataj, *The Forgiveness of Blood* presents a critical view of the anachronistic tradition of the blood feud from the point of view not of the principals involved – normally, of course, the adult males of two opposed clans – but of the children of one of the families affected.

Set in a rural village in northern Albania, the film allows the viewer insights into, primarily, the lives of Nik, a 17-year-old with plans to open an internet café, and (in the event, more interestingly) his younger sister Rudina who, whatever schemes for the future she may have had, finds herself taking over – almost literally – the role of family breadwinner. The script, developed by the director over time and drawn from extensive personal interviews in the region, allows for some interest in the family's other siblings too – notably younger brother

Credits

Produced by
Paul Mezey
Written by
Joshua Marston
Andamion Murataj
Director of Photography
Rob Hardy
Editor
Malcolm Jamieson
Production Designer
Tommaso Ortino
Music
Jacob Lieberman
Leonardo Heiblum

Sound Mixer
Judy Karp
Costume Designer
Emir Turkeshi

©Fandango Srl, Phoenix Film Investments APS and Artists Public Domain, Inc.
Production Companies
Fandango Portobello presents in association with

Artists Public Domain and Cinereach and Lissus Media a Journeyman Pictures production
A film by Joshua Marston
Executive Producers
Janine Gold
Eric Abraham
Domenico Procacci
Hunter Gray
Tyler Brodie

Cast
Tristan Halilaj
Nik Sindi Laçe
Rudina Refet Abazi
Mark Ilire Vinca Çelaj
Drita Zana Hasaj
Bardha Erjon Mani
Tom Luan Jaha

Zef Çun Laçi
Ded Veton Osmani
Sokol Zefir 'Bep' Bushati
Valmir Selman Lokaj
Kreshnik Kol Zefi
Shpend Elisajed Tallalli
Dren

Dolby Digital In Colour
[1.85:1]
Subtitles

Distributor
Soda Pictures

Italian theatrical title
La faida

Synopsis

A country village in northern Albania, the present day. Driving his horse-drawn cart, bread-seller Mark finds his usual path barred by stones. Later he is joined by 17-year-old Nik, the eldest of his four children, in the local bar, where Mark argues with his neighbour Sokol: land once owned by Mark's family has been given to Sokol by the state.

The next day, Mark finds that Sokol has closed access to his boundary road; Mark returns home to get his brother Zef in order to confront Sokol. On his way home after the last day at school, Nik is intercepted by police. They escort him home, where he finds that his uncle Zef has been arrested and his father has disappeared following a violent confrontation in which Sokol was killed. A meeting of elders is called to discuss the proper procedures to be followed according to 'the Kanun', a centuries-old code of law, which decrees that Sokol's family have the right to kill Mark or any one of his male

offspring. Mark's family are confined to the house until a reprieve or an agreement, a 'besa', is granted.

Mark's 15-year-old daughter Rudina is forced to quit school and take over his bread run. Mark returns at night to instruct Nik in the use of a rifle and then goes back into hiding. Nik sneaks out to meet his girlfriend Bardha. Rudina is intimidated by Sokol's cousin. On Nik's initiative, a feud mediator is brought in from a nearby town, but to no avail. One evening, the family's barn is set alight. Mark, on another visit, is arrested by police, whereupon a 'besa' is granted to Nik, allowing him temporary freedom of movement. It is rescinded, however, when Mark is granted parole. Fear, tension, anger and frustration bear down so heavily on Nik that he decides to risk his life and visit Sokol's family to demand an end to the feud. They agree to give him 24 hours to leave Albania forever, and he accepts their offer. Rudina watches her brother leave and contemplates her own enhanced responsibilities.

Ice Age Continental Drift

USA 2012

Directors: Steve Martino, Michael Thurmeier
Certificate U 92m 31s

Reviewed by Thirza Wakefield

Scrat, the elastic, apparently invertebrate rodent – still obsessed with that elusive acorn – benefits again from the 3D treatment in this add-on to the *Ice Age* franchise. Attempting to bury his nut under ice, the squirrel splits the ground and freefalls to Earth's inner core. And so, according to this geology-bending sequel, the continents were formed. Back on the Earth's surface, Manny the mammoth, Sid the sloth and Diego the sabre-toothed cat are separated from their community in a landslide. Set adrift on the sea with Sid's granny, the friends must find a way back to the mainland while fighting off the carnivorous Captain Gutt and his pirate crew. As is to be expected, they encounter all manner of setbacks and find unlikely allies in paragliding chipmunks and a whale called Precious.

That pirates should form the mainsail of the story is disappointing: with the release of Aardman's *The Pirates! In an Adventure with Scientists!* earlier this year, the swashbuckling theme feels a little worn, if not plundered altogether after four instalments of *Pirates of the Caribbean*. Besides being animals – a baboon, a rabbit and a walrus – there's nothing new about these seafarers, and the circular plot (multiple captives, multiple ships) isn't half as successful as the understated A-to-B rescue mission of the 2002 original.

Credits

Produced by

Lori Forte
John C. Donkin

Screenplay

Michael Berg
Jason Fuchs

Story

Michael Berg
Lori Forte

Cinematographer

Renato Falcão

Edited by

James M. Palumbo
David Ian Salter

Art Director

Nash Dunnigan

Music

John Powell

Sound Designer

Randy Thom

©Twentieth

Century Fox Film

Corporation (in all

territories except

Brazil, Italy, Japan,

Korea and Spain)

©TCF Hungary

Film Rights

Exploitation Limited

Liability Company

and Twentieth

Century Fox Film

Corporation (in

Brazil, Italy, Japan,

Korea and Spain)

Production

Companies

Twentieth Century

Fox Animation

presents a Blue Sky

Studios production

Executive

Producers

Chris Wedge

Carlos Saldanha

Voice Cast

Ray Romano

Manny

John Leguizamo

Sid

Denis Leary

Diego

Seann William

Scott

Crash

Josh Peck

Eddie

Peter Dinklage

Captain Gutt

Wanda Sykes

Granny

Jennifer Lopez

Shira

Queen Latifah

Ellie

Josh Gad

Louis

Keke Palmer

Peaches

Nick Frost

Flynn

Aziz Ansari

Squint

Drake

Ethan

Nicki Minaj

Steffie

Dolby Digital/

Datasat Digital

Sound

In Colour

[2.35:1]

Some screenings

presented in 3D

Distributor

20th Century Fox

International (UK)

8,326 ft +8 frames

Synopsis

Two million years ago, Scrat the squirrel buries his precious acorn, causing the land to split into continents. As the land shifts, Manny and his friends Diego the sabre-toothed cat and Sid the sloth are set adrift from the mainland, along with Sid's granny. Manny vows to return to wife Ellie and daughter Peaches. After various adventures involving Captain Gutt and his pirates, Manny is reunited with his family. Loaded on to an iceberg, they make their new home in a lagoon.

In the Dark Half

United Kingdom 2011

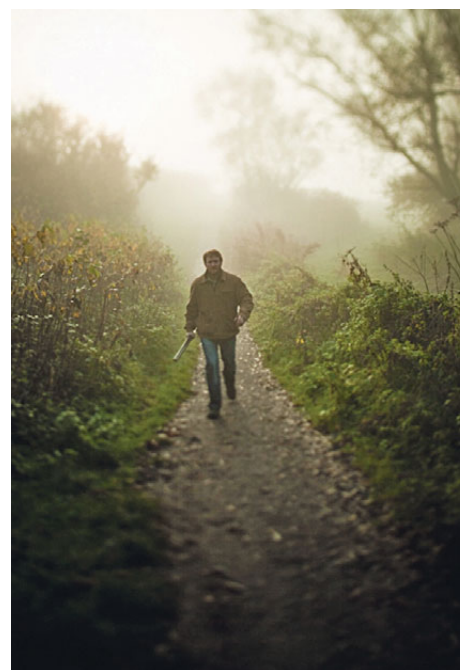
Director: Alastair Siddons
Certificate 15 84m 48s

Reviewed by Roger Clarke

This is the story of a teenage girl dealing with profound grief. Not to be confused with the Stephen King novel *The Dark Half*, it's a low-budget psychological drama with occult overtones and real flashes of acting and design brilliance. The weak link, however, is the script.

Marie (Jessica Barden) is living with her mother in a rundown terraced house that backs on to a wooded hill whose haunting presence seems to loom over the whole film. Up this hill she goes, again and again, seeming forever breathless and in flight. In a tragic scene, while Marie is babysitting for the next-door neighbour, a little boy drops dead. The girl makes an old concrete pillbox on the hill into a kind of den and becomes convinced that the boy's soul has flown there. Her mother, who seems engaged in knocking down parts of their house but never rebuilding them, is unsympathetic. Marie turns the pillbox into a kind of fairy grotto, with spirit catchers and witchy artefacts fluttering in the draughts breathing in from the outside (a fine piece of production design by Max Bellhouse). There is a sense of the Wiccan abroad, and Samhain, the pre-Christian fire festival, is mentioned. It's of interest that Barden performed in the Royal Court production of *Jerusalem*, which shares some of the same themes of deep and immemorial Albion. The film's DNA also encompasses 1960s/70s TV drama such as the adaptation of Alan Garner's *The Owl Service*. Some of the disassociated, numbed aspects of the film seem similar to *Helen* (2008), another micro-budget British film.

Barden's acting is as taut and wiry as a rabbit snare, but the support of Tony Curran as the sullen poacher (known as 'Filthy') living next-door is also key. The soundscape of the film is strong, its usually short scenes featuring imaginative use of disorientating sonic effects and spare piano. But it's



Old Albion: Tony Curran

Dren, whose life, like Nik's, is threatened by the edicts of a centuries-old feud code, 'the Kanun', which allows a victim's kin to take the life of a male in retribution. With the family confined to their house indefinitely by what is in effect a prison sentence, Dren's emotional difficulties serve to present, in sketch form, the pervasive, destructive nature of the kind of modern blood feud that still obtains in Albania today.

In fact, the many family scenes in *The Forgiveness of Blood* are the most engrossing feature of the film. (Possibly a more experimental director might have risked keeping a myopic – and thus more concentrated – eye on them, leaving the viewer to intuit the events happening outside the family house by observing the children's changing behaviour.) The impact of these scenes is enhanced by the generally high standard of the acting by the young, non-professional cast, notably Sindi Lacey as Rudina. Ultimately, however, Marston's decision to integrate these intimate scenes with the main developments of the feud and its arbitration by the respective families' elders (albeit leaving the altercation between Nik's father Mark and his uncle Zef and their neighbours unseen and merely tantalisingly vaguely reported) dissipates somewhat the emotional force and dynamic impetus of the film. (Here it should be stated that Mark turns out not to be involved in his neighbour Sokol's murder – as he indeed forcefully states – but rather his accidental death.)

That's not to say that the filmmakers don't make their main point – or, rather, expose an anachronistic absurdity – persuasively enough. Every scene in the film (maybe, every scene in northern Albanian life) seems to present startling juxtapositions of the modern and the old: cars alongside horse-drawn carts, mobile phones and blood feuds conditioned by 500-year-old codes of acceptable retribution.

Marston's adoption of a naturalistic, observational style, utilising a rambling, mostly handheld camera non-obtrusively but expressively handled by British cinematographer Rob Hardy (the film was shot in 'Scope, although the screening analysed here was presented in 1.85:1) and a discreet use of music by Jacobo Lieberman and Leonardo Heiblum, seems in keeping with the film's putative sense of moral seriousness and 'authenticity'. But it's questions about that very seriousness and 'authenticity' that tend to undermine the film's integrity. Marston's desire to meld the general with the specific – Nik is not just a victimised boy but, to some extent, is also made to represent the changing attitudes towards patriarchy held by his generation – is no doubt laudable. But his attempt to cover a wide ground and at the same time to go in this deep is problematic – perhaps even more so since he's a foreign director. (Compare and contrast, for instance, how the Tavianis approached a similar subject in *Padre Padrone* or Souleymane Cissé in *Yeelen*.) That said, *The Forgiveness of Blood* compellingly exposes an important contradiction in modern Albanian life with commitment, sincerity and evident passion.

the immaculate photography of the Catalan Neus Ollé that is the true star of the show (she won a Gaudí for Albert Serra's *Birdsong*). Ollé is a graduate of the UK National Film and Television School, and this appears to be her first UK feature gig.

The script by Lucy Catherine (whose credits include episodes of TV's *Casualty*) is often crude, bringing a literalist chill to what should have remained liminal – the large number of producers at play here may or may not have something to do with that. Genre aficionados might turn up their noses at the final clumsy revelation (seen before, not least in the 2003 Korean film *A Tale of Two Sisters*) but there's much to enjoy in the atmospherics, and one suspects the film will launch a couple of mainstream careers, including that of director Alastair Siddons, best known for documentaries and music promos.

Credits

Produced by
Margaret Matheson
Written by
Lucy Catherine
Director of Photography
Neus Ollé-Soronellas
Editor
Paul Carlin
Production Designer
Max Bellhouse
Composer
Dan Jones
Location
Sound Mixer
Andy Hoare
Costume Designer
Jemima Penny

©iFeatures Limited, BBC and The Film Agency for Wales
Production Companies
South West Screen & BBC Films present in association with Matador Pictures, Cinema Six and Regent Capital, The Film Agency for Wales and the City

of Bristol a Bard Entertainments/iFeatures production Developed with the assistance of South West Screen through the Regional Investment Fund for England, BBC Films Supported by Film Agency for Wales, The National Lottery through The Arts Council of Wales Made with the support of Bristol City Council
Executive Producers
Christopher Moll
Steve Jenkins
Nigel Thomas
Keith Potter

Cast
Tony Curran
Filthy
Lyndsey Marshal
Kathy
Jessica Barden
Marie

Alfie Hepper
Sean
Georgia Henshaw
Michelle
Tim Lewis
Mark
Simon Armstrong
Steve

Dolby Digital
In Colour
[2.35:1]

Distributor
Verve Pictures

7,632 ft +0 frames

Synopsis

England, present day. Fifteen-year-old Marie lives with her mother Kathy in a rundown house in a terrace that backs on to the open countryside. The next-door neighbours are 'Filthy' and his six-year-old son Sean. Marie often runs up to the top of a nearby wooded hill to be alone in an old concrete pillbox, on the way taking dead rabbits from traps and burying them. Though Filthy suspects Marie of filching his poached game, she's still useful to him, babysitting his son when he's out on the hill at night 'lamping' – dazzling rabbits with a torch and then shooting them. During one disastrous babysitting incident, Sean dies in Marie's care, under mysterious circumstances. She becomes even more reclusive; her mother, who seems to be constantly demolishing parts of the house, appears difficult and unsympathetic. Marie begins to believe that she's in touch with spirits. She avoids Filthy but eventually there is an angry confrontation between them: he tells Marie that her mother has been dead all this time, and we realise that much of what we have seen has been a morbid hallucination.

Jackpot

Norway/Denmark/Sweden 2011

Director: Magnus Martens

Certificate 15 85m 48s

Reviewed by Carmen Gray

Jackpot opens with a flashback from a police interrogation room to a pink-neon strip-joint carnage scene: blood spattered on walls, blow-up dolls hanging from the ceiling, massacred pole-dancers crumpled where they've fallen. While the film's tongue-in-cheek glorying in the visual excess of seamy gore is clearly in thrall to Tarantino, the crime-scene locale isn't the American underbelly of pop-culture lore but an otherwise benign-looking snowy town in Norway. This is the second feature from director Magnus Martens, who's changed tack after his 2003 romantic-comedy debut *United* to capitalise on the current global appetite for Scandinavian crime thrillers.

Based on a story by popular novelist Jo Nesbø, *Jackpot* sees still-bloodied suspect and sole crime-scene survivor Oscar (Kyrre Hellum) pressured to explain himself, having crawled out from under a corpse clutching a shotgun. Oscar's version as told to sceptical, hard-nosed Detective Solør (Henrik Mestad) – starting with a football-pools win for him and three ex-con workmates – plays out in flashbacks. But while we're left unsure of its veracity right to the end, there's little suspense. Lighter than other Scandinavian crime fare such as *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo*, the film tries for offbeat quirk in the vein of the Coen brothers. The artificial-Christmas-tree factory where Oscar works and a disused portable sunbed provide for some slapstick body-disposal hijinks. But along with the rising body count comes a sense that we've seen these gags before.

Exploring the dark

Mads Ousdal,
Kyrre Hellum



Credits

Producers
Martin Sundland
Are Heidenström
Written by
Magnus Martens
Based on a story by Jo Nesbø
Director of Photography
Trond Høines
Editor
Jon Endre Mørk
Production Design
Lina Nordqvist
Music
Magnus Beite
Sound Designer
Baard H. Ingebretsen
Costume Design
Gabriella Ekman

©Fantefilm Fiksjon AS
Production Companies
Produced by Fantefilm Fiksjon A/S
Co-produced with Film i Väst - Aschehoug
With support from

Nordisk Film, Film i Väst, Aschehoug Forlag, Filmlandet Invest, Film 3, Storyline Studios, Halden Municipality
Executive Producers
Jan Eirik Langøen

Cast
Kyrre Hellum
Oscar
Mads Ousdal
Thor
Henrik Mestad
Solør
Arthur Berning
Billy
Andreas Cappelen
Dan Tresko
Lena Kristin Ellingsen
Trine
Fridtjov Såheim
Gjedde
Peter Andersson
Lasse
Jan Grønli
Clausen

Marie Blokhus
Gina
Anne Marie Ottersen
Thor's Mother
Fredrik Petersson
Gøran

In Colour
Subtitles

Distributor
Metrodome
Distribution

7,722 ft +0 frames

Norwegian theatrical title
Arne Riddere

Synopsis

Norway, present day. Oscar Svendsen, manager of a factory, is under police interrogation, suspected of a gun massacre at strip joint Pink Heaven. He was the only survivor, found clutching a shotgun. Flashbacks show Oscar's version of events, as told to Detective Solør. Oscar wins 1.7 million kroner on the football pools with ex-con workmates Thor, Billy and Dan. When Thor and Billy kill Dan, the intimidated Oscar agrees to help them dispose of the body. Abandoning attempts to cut it up after Oscar's landlord becomes suspicious, they feed it into a wood-chipper at the factory. Reluctant to share the money, Billy attacks Oscar. Thor kills Billy. Thor and Oscar hide the body in a disused tanning bed. Strip-joint owner Lasse demands that Thor pay his debts. While collecting the winnings, Oscar and Thor see a police car towing the tanning bed. Hijacking it, Thor drives to pay Lasse, with Oscar in pursuit. After a shootout Oscar is arrested. A surveillance camera reveals an unidentified figure shooting Thor and taking the cash. Solør releases Oscar. Oscar's landlord, the real culprit, confronts Oscar over the money being fake. A struggle ensues. Oscar's girlfriend arrives with the real winnings, which she had earlier switched, and shoots the landlord. Oscar saws the body up and disposes of it. The couple fly abroad with the fortune.

Lawless

USA 2011

Director: John Hillcoat

Reviewed by Philip Kemp

For the seared, pitiless landscapes of his two previous features John Hillcoat's latest film substitutes the lushly wooded hills of 1930s Virginia. It's not unsymptomatic: altogether *Lawless* feels like a rather less rigorous venture than either *The Proposition* (2005) or *The Road* (2009). True, like the colonial-era Australia or the post-apocalyptic America of its predecessors it's set in an endemically dangerous, violent world, indeed sometimes almost to the point of parody; it seems that virtually every exchange must end in a punch to the face at the very least, if not a knifing, shooting, throat-slitting or near-decapitation with a shovel. Yet for all this full-blooded mayhem you can't help wondering if Hillcoat and his screenwriter/composer Nick Cave may be pulling back a little, going for a safer option after the bleakness of *The Road* failed to set the box office alight.

Echoes of earlier, more audacious films keep creeping in – not least *Bonnie and Clyde* (1967), with its Southern States Depression-era setting and its sympathetic criminals up against the vicious forces of the law. (Dane DeHaan's Cricket, the naive lad who helps the bootlegging Bondurant brothers maintain their stills, even looks like a younger version of Michael J. Pollard.) Even so, for most of the running time Hillcoat keeps the action moving along at an exhilarating clip, only occasionally clogged by some clunky voiceover narration. Tom Hardy as Forrest, the toughest of the supposedly 'indestructible' brothers, brings an undertow of humour to his strong-silent persona, responding to most remarks with a grunt and only occasionally uttering a lapidary pronouncement such as "It's not violence that sets men apart, it's the distance they're willing to go." Gary Oldman contributes an amused cameo as a Chicago gang boss, but the film is almost stolen by Guy Pearce as the chief villain, dandyish Special Deputy Charley Rakes. With his jet-black centreperted brilliantined hair, fastidious white gloves and clamped-on sneer, Pearce grabs all his scenes with relish, while keeping the role just this precarious side of high camp.

In this aggressively macho world neither of the female parts amounts to much. Jessica Chastain, as the ex-nightclub dancer with her eye on Forrest, makes the most of a thin role, but Mia Wasikowska is stuck with demure as Bertha, the preacher's daughter wooed by youngest Bondurant brother Jack. It's Jack, the youngster who gradually finds his independence and becomes a Man, who slowly comes to dominate the action – which is regrettable since he's played by Shia LaBeouf, whose stolid presence weighs down the movie. And as with *The Road*, a touch of last-minute sentimentality, to do with the killing of loveable innocent Cricket, slightly mars the tone. Perhaps the film's greatest asset is DP Benoît Delhomme (who also shot *The Proposition*), who brings to his Virginia hillscapes wood-smoky tones that suggest both the illicit mountain stills and the murky era that spawned them.



Moonshine kingdom: Shia LaBeouf

Credits

Produced by
Douglas Wick
Lucy Fisher
Megan Ellison
Michael Benaroya
Screenplay
Nick Cave
Based on the book
*The Wettest County
in the World* by
Matt Bondurant
**Director of
Photography**
Benoît Delhomme
Edited by
Dylan Tichenor
Art Director

Gershon Ginsburg
Music
Nick Cave
Warren Ellis
**Production
Sound Mixer**
Lisa Pinero
Costume Designer
Margot Wilson

@Bootleg Movie LLC
**Production
Companies**
The Weinstein
Company/Yuk
Films and Benaroya
Pictures present an

Annappurna Pictures
production
A Douglas Wick/Lucy
Fisher production
A Blumhansonallen
Films production
A Benaroya Pictures
Production
A Pie Films Production
Executive Producers
Dany Wolf
Rachel Shane
Jason Blum
Scott Hanson
Cassian Elwes
Laura Rister
Robert Ogden

Barnum
Ted Schipper
Randy Manis
Ben Sachs

Cast
Shia LaBeouf
Jack Bondurant
Tom Hardy
Forrest Bondurant
Gary Oldman
Floyd Banner
Mia Wasikowska
Bertha Minnix
Jessica Chastain
Maggie Beauford

Jason Clarke
Howard Bondurant
Dane DeHaan
Cricket Pate
Guy Pearce
Charley Rakes
Chris McGarry
Danny
Tim Tolin
Mason Wardell
Lew Temple
Deputy Henry Abshire
Marcus Hester
Deputy Jeff Richards
Bill Camp
Sheriff Hodges

In Colour
[2.35:1]

Distributor
Momentum Pictures

Synopsis

Franklin County, Virginia, 1931. Under Prohibition the Bondurant brothers – Howard, Forrest and Jack – are making a good living distilling and selling moonshine whiskey, keeping the sheriff happy with the occasional case. Cricket Pate, a lad with a crippled foot, tends the stills for them. Maggie Beauford, an ex-dancer from Chicago, comes to run the brothers' filling station-cum-diner. Newly appointed DA Mason Wardell brings in Special Deputy Charley Rakes to enforce his authority in the county. Rakes makes it clear that all bootleggers will have to pay protection money if they want to stay in business – or indeed alive. Only the Bondurants refuse to cooperate.

Forrest beats up two deputies sent to make him pay. Two Chicago hoods arrive, ostensibly to buy liquor, but when they get fresh with Maggie, Forrest beats them up and throws them out. They later jump him and slit his throat, then rape Maggie. Forrest walks to the hospital and gets his throat sewn up. While he recuperates, Jack and Cricket deliver a truckload of liquor to Chicago gangster Floyd Banner, whose heavies pull guns on

them. Floyd rescues them and gives them a note for Forrest telling him where to find the two hoods, who are working for Rakes. Forrest and Howard track the men down, tie them up and castrate them, dumping their genitals outside Rakes's hotel room.

Jack woos Bertha Minnix, despite the hostility of her preacher father. Maggie persuades Forrest to sleep with her. Rakes, becoming increasingly ruthless, locates the brothers' still in the hills and attacks in force when Jack has taken Bertha there. Entrusting Bertha to Cricket, Howard and Jack put up fierce resistance but are overwhelmed and flee. Cricket and Bertha are captured; Rakes sends Bertha home but kills Cricket and blows up the still. Jack drives to confront Rakes and his men at a roadblock; the sheriff tries to mediate but a gun battle breaks out. Forrest and Howard join in, helped by the other local bootleggers. Forrest is shot by Rakes, who is killed by Howard and Jack.

In 1934, Prohibition has been repealed, and the three Bondurant brothers (Forrest survived) are leading respectable married lives.

Leave It on the Floor

USA 2011
Director: Sheldon Larry



Ballroom blitz: Miss Barbie-Q, Phillip Evelyn

Reviewed by Sophie Mayer

Spoiler
Alert

Between 1929-43 there was a scattering of all-African-American musicals in the US, showcasing jazz and the underground nightlife of locales such as Harlem, which had become fashionable with urbane white audiences. In celebrating ball culture, whose multimedia queer fashion and dance extravaganzas are created on a shoestring by African-American gay and trans communities, Sheldon Larry's *Leave It on the Floor* harks back to that almost forgotten cinematic moment.

Like the juke joints of Harlem, the catwalk shows of balls (explored in Jennie Livingston's 1990 documentary *Paris Is Burning*) offer the perfect setting for a backstage musical, since the characters live their lives as self-conscious performances. "I am living in a movie where I get to say all the best lines," announces Queef Latina, 'house mother' of the House of Eminence, where protagonist Brad (Ephraim Sykes) is first introduced into ball culture. The plot is as complex and deep as that of the typical Hollywood musical: Brad meets ball culture, loses ball culture and makes up with ball culture, having learned and grown.

Queef is played by Miss Barbie-Q, who appeared in Lady Gaga's 'Telephone' video, and it is to music videos rather than the traditional musical that the film's style and choreography refer. Choreographer Frank Gatson Jr and composer Kim Burse, the team behind Beyoncé, suggest a new direction for the genre by blending the battle-oriented structure of films like *Step Up* with the compact storytelling of videos such as 'Single Ladies', while sharing with *Glee* the fluid movement between interior monologue/fantasy and public performance.

With R&B star Frank Ocean recently coming out via his Tumblr, and the rise of queer MCs and rappers such as Azealia Banks, the supposedly straight world of mainstream hip-hop and the queer world of ball culture are increasingly crossing over. The film celebrates this emergence into the mainstream while at the same time emphasising the continuing homophobia of American culture in general and the important alternative family that ball communities offer. The penultimate ensemble number, 'His Name Is Shawn', takes place at a funeral and draws on gospel to create a musical battle between the house

members and the birth family who insist on the use of the deceased's male name.

As in a traditional musical, both family and romantic love win out in the end – although Queef, recovering from the loss of her cheating lover and her daughter, ends the film not with a soaring ballad but with a sharp glam-stomper, celebrating the resilience and joyousness with which ball culture faces the world.

Credits

Produced by
Sheldon Larry
Producers
Glenn Gaylord
Gabriel Blanco
Screenplay/Lyrics
Glenn Gaylord
Story
Sheldon Larry
Glenn Gaylord
Director of Photography
Tom Camarda
Editor
Charles Bornstein
Production Designer
Giao-Chau Ly
Music
Kimberly Burse
Sound Mixer

Nadia Nikolic Bowen
Costume Designer
Hunter Wells
Choreography
Frank Gatson Jr

©Leave It on the Floor LLC
Production Company
A Sheldon Larry film
Executive Producers
Marc L. Bailin
Sheldon Larry

Cast
Miss Barbie-Q
Queef Latina
Phillip Evelyn

Princess Eminence
Andre Myers
Carter Eminence
Ephraim Sykes
Brad Lyle
James Alsop
Eppie Durall

In Colour
[2.35:1]

Distributor
Peccadillo
Pictures Ltd

Synopsis

US, the present. Caught looking at gay porn on his computer, Brad Lyle is kicked out of home by his mother. He steals her car and drives to Los Angeles. When his wallet is stolen he follows the thief to a club. There he's introduced to 'ballroom' culture by Princess, a member of the 'House of Eminence', as is Carter, the thief. 'House mother' Queef Latina is suspicious of Brad, regarding him as trouble. Princess brings Brad to the house meeting, and Queef – happy because boyfriend Caldwell will soon be released from prison – agrees that Brad can compete at an upcoming ball. Carter instructs Brad in how to 'walk' in the Sex Siren category. Brad takes Carter to the rooftop where he has contemplated suicide; Carter promises him a relationship. Princess manoeuvres Brad into a compromising position on the night of the ball. Brad's attempts to win back Carter's affections end in the death of Eminence member Eppie Durall; grief-stricken, Queef plans to dissolve the House of Eminence but Brad – rescued from a suicide attempt by Carter – dissuades her.

Carter and Princess make up, Queef returns to the catwalk and Brad wins Sex Siren under her tutelage.

Lola Versus

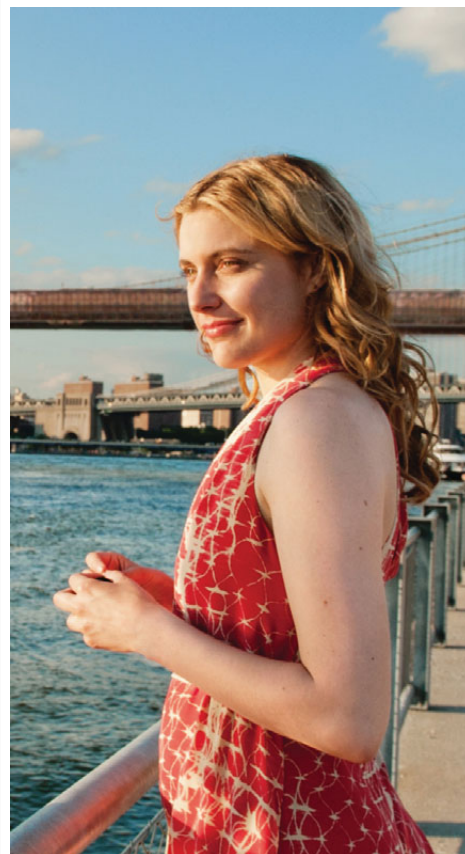
USA 2012
Director: Daryl Wein
Certificate 15 86m 53s

Reviewed by Henry K. Miller

Living in New York on family money while being vaguely intellectual has never looked less exciting. Lola (Greta Gerwig) is a postgraduate student, her fiancé-turned-ex-fiancé Luke (Joel Kinnaman) is a painter, her best friend Alice (Zoe Lister Jones) is an actor and her other best friend Henry (Hamish Linklater) plays in a band. None of them ever seems to make a dime, and none of them seems to have even a passing, let alone consuming interest in what they're ostensibly doing. The filmmakers certainly don't: Lola earns a PhD during the course of the film, and they don't just give those things away. On the whole, getting one entails a certain amount of book-learning and self-abnegation; for Lola it's a permanent staycation.

The lack of passion is endemic – Lola's amatory pursuits, which make up the bulk of the film, are similarly perfunctory. Luke, psycho eyes notwithstanding, is handsome but vacant, while sensitive Henry, who wants "someone to hang out with", is a weed with a mean streak. Though Lola eventually decides, wisely, to be alone, the surprise ending can't make up for the elongated sitcom shenanigans that precede it. It isn't simply a lack of chemistry between Gerwig and her co-stars; the script doesn't provide their characters with reactants to begin with. When Henry hooks up with Alice, the mystery is almost total: disastrously played by one of the film's writers, Alice, bereft of wit, culture or any apparent inner life, isn't someone to hang out with, still less, as Henry does, call "sweetheart".

There are times when *Lola Versus* approaches satire, only to chicken out.



Wasted youth: Greta Gerwig



ABANDON NORMAL DEVICES

29 Aug – 02 Sep
2012

Festival of New
Cinema, Digital
Culture & Art

Manchester
& across the
North West

5 Festival days
with over
80 artists/
25 new
commissions/
30 partners

andfestival.org.uk

Presented by:

CORNERHOUSE
ARTFILMBOOKSFOODDRINK



• FLUX



Corridor8
Contemporary Art
and Writing Journal

Funded by:



creative
england



Awarding funds from
The National Lottery®



LSO Live
lso.co.uk

The London Symphony Orchestra
plays the greatest film scores of

DIMITRI TIOMKIN

One of Hollywood's most highly-regarded composers, Russian-born Tiomkin received no less than twenty-two Academy Award nominations. Closely associated with Westerns and Hitchcock, his music helped define the sound of movies.

featuring music from ...

Rawhide – Giant

Wild is the Wind – The Alamo
High Noon – Dial M for Murder
The High & the Mighty
and more

2SACD LS00719



Available now on Super Audio CD* or download from all good stores, or order online from lso.co.uk

Also, available from the **iTunes Store** as specially-mastered high-quality **Mastered for iTunes** audio

*compatible with all CD players

LSO Live – the energy and emotion you only experience live

While Lola's thesis – on Mallarmé and the aesthetics of silence – is taken relatively seriously during the few moments of screen time it's allotted, everyone else is wasting their youth and their allowance. Luke does paintings of scenes from celebrity sex tapes. Henry plays in a band that sounds a bit like one of those mid-2000s bands that sounded a bit like Gang of Four or Joy Division. Alice is seen in an avant-garde theatre piece called *Pogrom!* which neither of her good friends Lola or Henry likes or understands.

If this were more than light snark the film might have moved out of the well-worn romcom tracks down which it trundles; but at the same time it is too dismissive to be taken as self-deprecation, and makes the main characters all the less sympathetic. After their film was less than warmly received in the US, its makers complained that "older male critics don't like messy, unapologetic stories with women at the centre". Apart from the obvious truth that older male critics can't get enough of Greta Gerwig, *Lola Versus* doesn't, in the sense intended here, have enough to apologise for, and only pretends messiness.

Credits

Produced by
Michael London
Joelyn Hayes
Simpson
Janice Williams

Written by
Zoe Lister-Jones
Daryl Wein

Director of Photography
Jakob Ihre

Editors
Suzy Elmiger
Susan Littenberg

Production Designer
Teresa Mastropiero
Music
Fall On Your Sword
Sound Mixer
Jeff Pullman
Costume Designer
Jenny Gering

©Twentieth Century
Fox Film Corporation,

LV Film, LLC
Production Companies
Fox Searchlight
Pictures presents
in association
with Groundswell
Productions
Executive Producers
Zoe Lister-Jones
Daryl Wein

Cast

Greta Gerwig
Lola
Joel Kinnaman
Luke
Zoe Lister-Jones
Alice
Hamish Linklater
Henry
Bill Pullman
Lenny

Ebon Moss-Bachrach
Nick
Jay Pharoah
Randy
Debra Winger
Robin

Dolby Digital/ Datasat/SDDS
Colour by
Mega Playground
Prints by
DeLuxe
[1.85:1]

Distributor
20th Century Fox
International (UK)

7,819 ft +8 frames

Synopsis

New York City, the present. Twenty-nine-year-old postgraduate student Lola is dumped by her artist fiancé Luke just weeks before their wedding. She is comforted by her hippie parents and her two best friends, actor Luke and indie musician Henry, who is also a friend of Luke's. Alice has designs on Henry but Lola ends up kissing him after inviting him to share her bed. Their relationship proceeds by fits and starts until Lola – after Henry has said they shouldn't try to label what they have – spends the night with an architect.

Henry starts sleeping with Alice and moves in with Luke, who has started seeing another woman. Lola is very upset when she finds out about Henry and Alice, and briefly renounces normal social relations in order to complete her PhD thesis. Afterwards she makes up with Alice and throws a 30th birthday party in Brooklyn Bridge Park. Luke turns up and seems to want to get back together but Lola says she needs time alone, and returns to an empty apartment.

Love

USA 2011

Director: William Eubank

Reviewed by Anton Bitel

Spoiler Alert
If David Bowie's 1969 single 'Space Oddity', rush-released to coincide with the Apollo 11 launch, was an overt musical riff on Stanley

Kubrick's groundbreaking 2001: *A Space Odyssey*, then William Eubank's *Love* brings even closer this merger between cinematic cosmology and concept album. For while the film shares with Kubrick's 1968 headtrip – as well as with *Solaris* (1972), *Contact* (1997) and *Moon* (2009) – a concern with the relationship between the human mind and everything beyond it (other minds, technology, aliens, God, the universe), it was also independently financed by American alternative-rock collective Angels & Airwaves as a companion piece to their studio album *Love* (released in two parts between 2010 and 2011). Originally conceived as an extended avant-garde music video, the project expanded into a feature-length labour of love for writer/director/cinematographer/production designer Eubank, who has wrung every last cent from a modest budget by hand-building a space-station set in his parents' driveway and digging (with the help of his brothers) the underground tunnels for the film's American Civil War sequences.

Sole occupant of a space station in low orbit, Captain Lee Miller (Gunner Wright) finds himself cut off from all human contact in the aftermath of an unspecified global catastrophe. Over many years he endures this ordeal of extreme isolation by imagining others on board with him, and assimilating an 1864 journal mysteriously secreted behind a circuit panel. Its author, Captain Lee Briggs (Bradley Horne), was similarly the sole survivor of various battles in the American Civil War before witnessing something life-changing out in the wilderness – and his wartime exploits, as well as being vividly presented on screen, are inked by the mentally deteriorating Miller all over the space station's interior surfaces and eventually into his own flesh. These parallel and merging stories of human madness and hope for something better over the horizon are occasionally interrupted by faux-archival interviews with talking heads who discuss the narratives and connections that make bearable the chaos of life and the inevitability of death.

All these themes come together in a paradigm-shifting freakout of an ending aboard a different, possibly alien spacecraft that has docked with Miller's space station. It may be a sophisticated archival Ark of the history of human experience, or a 'projection' of Miller's fragmenting mind, or just a metaphor for the individual's interface with otherness – and what exactly happens to Miller there, and how it relates to the 'love' of the film's title, remains open to debate. This intriguing film offers up enough intellectual mystery to inspire the sort of awe that Eubank's stunning visuals will also inevitably elicit. Like Billy Nayer Show frontman Cory McAbee's amazing if underseen *The American Astronaut* (2001), *Love* shows that sometimes it takes a musician's sensibility to orchestrate a cosmic ballet.



The best lightyears of your life: Gunner Wright

Credits

Produced by
Vertel Scott
Nate Kolbeck
Dan Figur

Written by
William Eubank

Director of Photography
William Eubank

Film Editors
Brian Berdan
Scott Chestnut

Production Designer
William Eubank
Music
Angels & Airwaves
Supervising Sound Editors

Robert Kellough
Craig Henghan

©Angels & Airwaves

Production Company
Angels & Airwaves
presents

Executive Producers
Tom Delonge
Mark Eaton
Jon Humphrey

Cast
Gunner Wright
Captain Lee Miller
Corey Richardson

General McClain
Bradley Horne
Captain Lee Briggs
Roger Fanter
the storyteller

In Colour
[1.85:1]

Distributor
High Fliers/
Blue Dolphin

Synopsis

Earth's orbit, 2039. Captain Lee Miller, sole occupant of an international space station, loses contact with mission control. He alleviates his boredom and loneliness by talking to himself and to the imagined presences of female astronauts. While repairing the life-support systems, Miller discovers the journal of Captain Lee Briggs, who in 1864 was sent by his beleaguered Yankee general on a solo mission to observe a mysterious object discovered east of the Colorado Basin.

Six years after his abandonment, Miller contemplates a suicidal leap to Earth but changes his mind. Some time later he receives a data package of a television interview that he gave shortly before lift-off and computer notification of a docking spacecraft. Entering the spacecraft, he travels via stairs and elevators to a room full of digital memory banks. A computer monitor shows Miller's pre-flight interview, while an old book compiled by the National Organisation of Archival History (NOAH) offers an account of a scientific project beginning with Briggs's discovery of a spacecraft. The computer reveals that Miller is the last remaining human, and that he has boarded an Ark-like collection of memories. Miller merges with the system around him in a cosmic union.

The Man Inside

United Kingdom 2012
Director: Dan Turner
Certificate 15 99m 23s

Reviewed by Hannah McGill

Powered by the same febrile earnestness that lent such urgency to the ripped-from-the-headlines juvenile-delinquency potboilers of the 1950s – and that tends now to leave them looking like kitsch jokes – Dan Turner's urban British thriller gives its youthful cast of characters a daunting array of dramatic flashpoints to contend with. Within minutes of its opening, *The Man Inside* has racked up domestic violence, parental neglect, racial tension, knife crime and inherited murderous rage as factors mitigating against its protagonist Clayton; before long he'll have a drug-addicted girlfriend with a vengeful ex to add to his list of woes.

Central to Clayton's struggle, and crudely but effectively conveyed by flashbacks to his wildly traumatic childhood, is his need to master 'the man inside' – a double-edged title concept that refers to both Clayton's father, a psychopathic murderer serving life in jail, and his own inner grown-up, who's too often choked by his ready anger. There's power in Turner's identification of the cyclical, self-generating nature of violence; Clayton, unlike his younger brother Jay, isn't swayed by peer pressure or cultural iconography but by his own automatic identification with his father, and by his mother's assumption that he will turn out the same way. (The script has Clayton constantly reminded that he looks like his father; it's a shame that the casting of the wholly dissimilar Ashley 'Bashy' Thomas and David Harewood has rendered this motif a bit hollow.) But the film throws so much at its characters that continual intrigue rather inhibits character development or emotional identification. By the time Michelle Ryan's heroin-addicted

gothette love interest Alexia is sweating through withdrawal in a room lit to resemble Hades, grand-guignol melodrama has firmly ousted empathetic observation. A story thread involving Alexia's ex-boyfriend is bizarrely inconsequential, and appears only to have been retained for the sake of the minor stunt-casting of former pop star Carl Barat in the role.

Cinematography is confident and performances broadly effective, though the brooding reticence of rapper 'Bashy' Thomas can shade into sullenness, and Ryan has to wrestle some truly tacky lines. Driven by the courage of its convictions, *The Man Inside* succeeds on many of its own terms – but its messy narrative could have used more work, and its solemnity means that it feels a little more like a well-intentioned teaching aid than a fully realised human story.



Punch and moody: Peter Mullan

Credits

Produced by
Dean Fisher
Written by
Dan Turner
Cinematography
Richard Swingle
Edited by
Richard Alderson
Production Design
Mickaela Trodden
Music
Laura Rossi
Sound Recordist

Andy Ludbrook
Costume Designer
Laura-Jane Aitman
©The Man Inside Ltd
Production Companies
Kaleidoscope Film
Distribution presents
in association with
The Fyzz Facility,
North Star Ventures
& Northern Film and

Media a Scanner-
Rhodes & Urban
Way production
Executive Producers
Spencer Pollard
Wayne Marc Godfrey
Robert Jones
Sean Kelly
Ray Panthaki

Cast

Ashley Thomas
Clayton Murdoch
Michelle Ryan
Alexia Sinclair
Jason Maza
Danny Lee
David Harewood
Eugene Murdoch
Ray Panthaki
Rose
Peter Mullan
Gordon Sinclair

Jenny Jules
Elizabeth Murdoch
Lennox Malachi-Kambala
Jay Murdoch
Theo Barklem-Biggs
Karl Lee
Zara Oram
Kia Murdoch
Samuel Foley
Alfie Levant
Selom Awadzi
Hoops

Carl Barat
Gavin Metcalf

In Colour
[2.35:1]

Distributor
Kaleidoscope
Entertainment
8,944 ft +8 frames

Synopsis

London, the present. Clayton Murdoch, an amateur boxer and the son of a convicted murderer, struggles with his own violent impulses as he tries to keep his brother Jay and sister Kia out of trouble. When Kia's boyfriend Alfie, by whom she is pregnant, is attacked and stabbed, Jay swears revenge on the assumed perpetrator, Kia's ex-boyfriend Carl. Carl's brother Danny tries to make peace. Alexia, daughter of Clayton's boxing coach Gordon and an old friend from primary school, visits the gym; she and Clayton flirt but he withdraws. Carl threatens Kia, ordering her to abort her pregnancy by Alfie, who remains unconscious in hospital. Clayton's father sends an emissary to offer protection to Clayton, Kia and Jay; Clayton snubs him, but Jay seeks his help to acquire a gun. Kia warns Clayton that Carl is on his way to the hospital to kill

Alfie. Clayton waits for him there; Danny intervenes between them and tries to make them reconcile. Jay goes to the prison to visit their father and arranges to be supplied with a gun. At the boxing gym, Clayton reacts against his coach goading him into anger.

Alexia comforts him, and tells him about her drug addiction and abusive ex. Alexia's ex comes looking for her, he and Clayton fight and Clayton kills him; Gordon finds the body, covers up the incident and warns his daughter away from Clayton. Kia has an abortion, suffers complications and is taken to hospital. Clayton finds Jay with the gun and they fight. He turns to Alexia but finds her deep in drug withdrawal. In a confrontation with Carl, Jay is killed. Clayton's father has a badly beaten Carl delivered to Clayton to be killed, but Clayton, with Alexia's support, opts to walk away.

Offender

United Kingdom 2012
Director: Ron Scalpello

Reviewed by Carmen Gray

Offender is the feature debut of director Ron Scalpello but only the latest in a string of crime films pumped out by UK production house Gunslinger (following *Shank*, *Anuvahood*, *Sket* and *Ill Manors*) portraying contemporary Britain as a vengeful youth gangland. Showing the brutality of a London young offenders' institution through the eyes of 20-year-old inmate Tommy, it's heavily indebted to Alan Clarke's *Scum* (1979). But while *Scum* provoked national debate through its committed critique of institutionalised violence, Scalpello's heavily stylised drama merely co-opts the earlier film's corrupt world of disillusioned youth and bullying screws as a convenient setting for a marketable tough-boy aesthetic. Joe Cole (TV's *Skins*) is miscast as Tommy, his fragilely chiselled mien more suited to style-magazine spreads than gritty cinematic realism, his disaffection fetishised as abjectly photogenic.

The revenge plot based on the snuffing-out of love's hope could have been borrowed from Gaspar Noé's *Irreversible* (2002), though *Offender* is neither visceral enough to achieve that film's raw impact nor conceptually shrewd enough to make existential nihilism more than a fashion statement.

Credits

Produced by
Nick Taussig
Paul Van Carter
Written by
Paul Van Carter
Director of Photography
Richard Mott
Editor
Johnny Rayner
Production Designer
Marie Lanna
Original Music
Chad Hobson
Sound Recordist
Ashok-Kumar Kumar
Costume Designer
Matthew Price
Stunt Co-ordinator
Jason White

presents a Revolver
Film Partners
production
A Gunslinger Films
production
An RDT Productions
co-production in
association with
Arnaud Lannic
and Met Film
A film by Ron
Scalpello
Executive Producers
Justin Marciano
Rhys David Thomas
Stephen Mitchell
Stuart Ford
Carlo Dusi

Shaun Dooley
Jackie Nash
Tyson Oba
Mason
David Ajala
Kelvin
Heider Ali
Ali
Jacob Anderson
Patrick
Vas Blackwood
Detective Boaz
G-FrSH
Angelface
Mark Harris
Governor Davis
Ruth Gemmel
Officer Cassie

In Colour
[1.85:1]

Distributor
Revolver
Entertainment

©Revolver RDT Film
Partners (No 1) PLC
Production Companies
Revolver
Entertainment

Cast
Joe Cole
Tommy Nix
English Frank
Jake
Kimberley Nixon
Elise

Synopsis

London, the present. Tommy has engineered his incarceration in a young offenders' institution in order to exact revenge on a gang of criminals also confined there.

Flashbacks to the 2011 London riots show the gang committing a robbery and shooting a shopkeeper. Their probation officer Elise, Tommy's pregnant girlfriend, suspects them. They assault her to intimidate her into silence and she miscarries. Devastated, she leaves Tommy.

Suspecting that Elise will talk and have him put away for life, gang member Jake orders his associate Mason, who's due for release, to kill her, threatening to harm Mason's baby if he refuses. Discovering that Jake was the one responsible for Elise's assault, Tommy fatally stabs him during a prison riot.

Petit Nicolas

France/Belgium 2009
Director: Laurent Tirard
Certificate PG 91m 28s

Reviewed by Perle Petit

Based on the well-known French children's series written by René Goscinny and illustrated by Jean-Jacques Sempé, *Petit Nicolas* comes across as saturated in nostalgia, a film whose overly saccharine nature and succession of increasingly improbable events will leave audiences divided.

Predominantly an amalgamation of stories from the 1964 title *Le Petit Nicolas a des ennuis* (*Nicholas in Trouble*), the film follows Nicolas's antics after he eavesdrops on a conversation between his parents which leads him to believe that he's about to have a baby brother, prompting various attempts to sabotage the sibling's arrival. Although the beginning and the end are a slightly irritating parenthesis of overdone sentimentality, the film is nonetheless an enjoyable experience, with welcome touches of absurdist humour.

Goscinny's idea was to write entirely from the point of view of a child, bad grammar and all. Director Laurent Tirard develops this on film through an almost constant first-person narration, with pleasing if predictable outcomes. The gap between the adults' and the children's worlds is emphasised: the children are allowed to roam free and let their imaginations run wild, while the adults are bogged down with the petty concerns of social status and daily drudgery. There are brief moments when the adults share the youngsters' flights of fantasy, yet even their daydreams are punctured by reality, as when a meddlesome neighbour scoffs at the sporting achievements Nicolas's father claims were once within his reach.

The relationship between Nicolas's parents is a focal point throughout the film. His mother (hilariously played by Valérie Lemercier) is a stereotypical 1950s housewife obsessed with bourgeois snobbery – at one point she tries to impress the boss's wife with lobster mayonnaise and her purposefully acquired knowledge of 13th-century skaldic poetry.

Petit Nicolas adheres strictly to the formula of many children's films: Nicolas's schoolmates, for instance, include a bespectacled teacher's pet, a messy-haired class dunce, a bully and an overweight friend who's constantly eating. But although they're unoriginal, these stereotypes are refreshing in comparison with their 'sassy' American counterparts. As Nicolas, the doe-eyed Maxime Godart is convincingly innocent, yet Victor Carles often steals the limelight as his scatterbrained friend Clotaire, who frets that he hasn't studied for the Rorschach test in a scene of simple yet highly effective comedy.

The only obvious criticism concerns the subtitles. The film relies on the children falling prey to literalism for comic effect, yet the heavyhanded translation makes them appear foolish rather than logically naive. What's more the fast-paced subtitles may prove tricky for younger viewers, suggesting that *Petit Nicolas* will be enjoyed more by an adult audience than by the children it's presumably designed for.



Frère game: Maxime Godart, Valérie Lemercier

Credits

Produced by
Olivier Delbosc
Marc Missonnier
Screenplay/Adaptation
Laurent Tirard
Grégoire Vigneron
Dialogue
Grégoire Vigneron
Alain Chabat
Laurent Tirard
Based on the work of
René Goscinny and
Jean-Jacques Sempé
Director of Photography
Denis Rouden
Editor
Valérie Deseine
Art Director
Françoise Dupertuis
Music
Klaus Badelt
Sound
Ricardo Castro
Paul Heymans
Thomas Gauder
Costume Designer
Pierre-Jean Larroque

©Fidélité Films,
IMAV Éditions, Wild
Bunch, M6 Films,
Mandarin Films,

Scope Pictures,
Fidélité Studios
Production Companies
Fidélité and
IMAV presents in
association with
Wild Bunch
In co-production
with M6 Films and
Scope Pictures
With the participation
of Orange Cinéma
Séries, M6 and
Région Wallonne
With the participation
of Fortis Film Fund
With the support
of Tax Shelter du
gouvernement
fédéral de Belgique
et Wallimage
Executive Producer
Christine De Jekel

Cast

Maxime Godart
Nicolas
Vincent Claude
Alceste
Charles Vaillant
Geoffroy

Victor Carles
Clotaire
Benjamin Averty
Eudes
Germain Petit
Damico
Rufus
Damian Ferdel
Agnan
Virgile Tirard
Joachim
Elisa Heusch
Marie Edwige
Valérie Lemercier
Nicolas' mother
Kad Merad
Nicolas' father
Sandrine Kiberlain
teacher

Dolby Digital/DTS
In Colour
[1.85:1]
Subtitles

Distributor
Soda Pictures

8,232 ft +0 frames

French theatrical title
Le Petit Nicolas

Synopsis

France, the 1950s. After his friend Joachim complains about his new baby brother, Nicolas overhears his parents talking about inviting his father's boss for dinner, and mistakenly believes he is also to have a little brother. He worries that his parents will no longer want him and will abandon him in the forest, so he tries to please them by cleaning the house with his friends and buying his mother flowers. Causing accidental destruction with every attempt at a good deed, Nicolas and his friends decide instead to have the baby kidnapped when it arrives. Mistaking a car mechanic for a gangster, they attempt to raise money for the kidnapping, again causing mayhem. Meanwhile Nicolas's parents stress over the meal with the boss, which ends in disaster when Nicolas's mother accidentally gets drunk. Nicolas bumps into Joachim, who tells him that he has changed his mind and that having a little brother is great. Nicolas runs home to thank his parents, who realise his misunderstanding. Seeing how disappointed he is, they decide to have another baby, but to Nicolas's dismay it is a little girl.

The Queen of Versailles

Sweden/Norway/Switzerland/Finland 2012
Director: Lauren Greenfield

Reviewed by Kate Stables

"Everyone wants to be rich. And the next best thing is to *feel* rich. And if they don't want to feel rich, they're probably dead." Timeshare mogul David Siegel is explaining the thinking that fuelled Westgate Resorts, his sizeable US business empire. Which in turn supported his wife Jacqueline's million-dollar-a-year shopping habit and the building of 'Versailles', the largest private house in America.

As Lauren Greenfield's reflective, patient camerawork follows Jacqueline through private planes and yachts and vast bathrooms, her documentary initially seems a more measured version of the ubiquitous *Real Housewives* Bravo TV franchise – a glossy, self-aware gawp inside the lifestyle and marriage of the Siegels, in which they tell their respective tales: her 'fairytale romance' and his trajectory from small-time property developer to billionaire. The film homes in on their bullet-proof bragging, David boasting of winning Florida for George W. Bush in 2000 and Jacqueline trumpeting his potency ("He sure doesn't need Viagra").

But as the credit-crunch of autumn 2008 starts to bite, the parade of lavish parties and shopping sprees judders to a halt and the film becomes an unblinking chronicle of the unravelling of the family's American Dream. Then one realises that this is also a financial-crisis documentary, a neat lesson about the crunch à la *Inside Job* (2010) or *American Casino* (2009). And that the Siegels are, incredibly, both perpetrators and victims of the credit boom. The film is very frank indeed about the parallels between Westgate's reliance on cheap bank credit and that of the "Johnny Lunchbuckets" – as sales head Richard Siegel terms them – who purchase their timeshares. When David Siegel, whose business was built on selling mortgages to subprime customers, characterises the banks as "pushers" who got him addicted to cheap money, the ironies come thick and fast – as they do when the film delves into the very different foreclosure experiences of the Siegel's limo driver and a small-town family friend to whom Jacqueline gives \$5,000 in a failed bid to save her house. Alongside all this Greenfield skilfully underlines the fraught relationship between the two giant buildings at the film's heart: when the mammoth PH Towers Westgate in Vegas can no longer sell its slivers of a dream lifestyle, it dooms the gargantuan 'Versailles' to moulder unfinished.

Space, and its use and abuse, form the film's quiet obsession. Greenfield is constantly contrasting Jacqueline's huge closets and her delight in the Brobdingnagian scale of 'Versailles' with David's retreat to a cramped, cramped home office. Timeshare customers look dazed and shrunk with awe in the Westgate's sleek suites, while the Siegel brood (eight children and a dozen animals) sprawl and squabble across their sizeable Florida mansion. A shrewd but not unsympathetic portrait of the marriage emerges from this, in which the focus increasingly switches from Jacqueline's shopaholic largesse to David's penny-pinching depression. Committedly



Goodbye to all that: Jacqueline Siegel

observational rather than satirical, Greenfield's film is not above sly juxtapositions and reveals (there's much play with the Siegels' 30-year age-gap, exotic pets killed by neglect and the extravagance of buying drive-through McDonald's in a limo). It lingers almost pruriently on Jacqueline's relentless rounds of Fraxel and Botox, and her cartoonishly sexy self-presentation (chiming with Greenfield's 2006 documentary *Thin*, on anorexic body fixation), but presents this as more than narcissism, an understandable response to being married to a man who playfully threatened to swap her for two 20-year-olds when she hit 40.

Still, in an era of scripted-reality media and agenda-driven theatrical documentaries, Greenfield's film has an admirably watchful and (perhaps deceptively) unjudgemental feel. There's the same mix of thoughtful but insatiable curiosity in the director's documentary short *Kids + Money* (2008) and in her LA photo-project 'Fast Forward'. Greenfield's photographic background infuses every scene here. Even as vast parties or family rows surge through the house, her telling compositions recall similar sharp-eyed photo-essays on the rich, such as Barbara Norfleet's 1980s shots of the Boston wealthy at play. She unerringly picks up on the Siegels' own self-aggrandising use of photography, their gallery of giant, gilt-framed family portraits mimicking the paintings in aristocratic houses, including a hilarious example of David as a medieval king surrounded by his progeny.

It's this visual acuity, and the play between photography and documentary, combined with its rich mix of themes, that makes *The Queen of Versailles* a fresh and intriguing big-screen response both to the financial crisis and to the tapped-out *Real Housewives* materialism-and-melodrama TV template. Under the glitzy trappings there's an unexpectedly bumpy morality tale in which the road of excess leads to the palace of foreclosure. "A kind of riches-to-rags story," as David Siegel gloomily opines at one point. Before promptly suing the producers for suggesting any such thing, allowing the delicious ironies to circulate off-screen as well as on.

Credits

Produced by
Lauren Greenfield
Danielle Renfrew
Behrens
Director of Photography
Tom Hurwitz, ASC
Edited by
Victor Livingston
Music by/Music Produced and Mixed by
Jeff Beal
Sound Recordist
Michael Jones

© Queen of Versailles, LLC
Production Companies
Evergreen Pictures presents in association with BBC Storyville, Impact Partners,

Candescant Films
In co-production with Plus Pictures, DR: Danish Broadcasting Corporation, VPRO
A Lauren Greenfield film
Produced in association with SVT, NRK, RTS, YLE
Produced with the support of Danish Film Institute and Film Commissioner Klara Grønning-Harris
Supported by a grant from the Sundance Institute Documentary Film Program
Cinereach Fund
Executive Producers
Frank Evers

Dan Cogan
In Colour
[1.85:1]

Distributor
Dogwoof

Synopsis

Florida, present day. Timeshare mogul David Siegel and wife Jacqueline are building 'Versailles', the largest private home in America. Jacqueline shows off their opulent, party-throwing lifestyle and large family. The couple disclose their modest backgrounds and marital history. We see Siegel's team hard-selling timeshares in their new Vegas tower resort. In September 2008 the financial crisis prevents Westgate, Siegel's company, from turning clients' timeshare mortgages into cash, imperilling his business empire. Six thousand employees are laid off, regional offices are closed and the Siegels cut back their spending drastically. Versailles is put up for sale but doesn't find a buyer. Jacqueline's friends from her hometown talk about their pride in her achievements. With domestic staff laid off, the Siegel home slides into chaos. Richard Siegel, David's son and business partner, reveals how timeshare companies require a constant stream of cheap borrowed money, which has now been turned off. Their clients are 'subprime' borrowers. The Siegels' Filipino nannies and two bankrupt friends share their own stories. David becomes depressed but refuses to cede his Vegas tower equity to the banks. Jacqueline goes on a Walmart spending spree. David nags the family about economising, and arguments break out. Finally and reluctantly he sells the Westgate Vegas tower to another company.

Salute

Australia 2008
Director: Matt Norman
PG 91m 56s

Reviewed by Geoffrey Macnab

Matt Norman's *Salute* arrives in British cinemas four years after it was made, in time for the London 2012 Olympics. Clearly produced on a low budget, it's nonetheless a rousing and affecting account of how Norman's uncle, the Australian sprinter Peter Norman, was caught up in a key moment in Olympic history. He was the 200-metre silver medallist in Mexico in 1968, standing beside black US athletes Tommie Smith and John Carlos when they made their black-power salute.

Peter Norman (who died in 2006, before the documentary was completed) is a thoroughly engaging screen presence: a gruff, genial Aussie who relishes telling stories about how he used to put off fellow athletes with sly digs when they gathered at the starting blocks. He was also a phenomenal runner, clocking a time of 20.06 seconds in the 200-metre final. Norman came to his peak as an athlete in Mexico and was the one 200-metre sprinter to challenge the dominance of the Americans, but he has largely been written out of the history books. As the documentary reveals, the Australian authorities didn't invite him to the 2000 Olympics in Sydney. Nor did he run for his country again after 1968.

Norman didn't make a salute himself but he supported Smith and Carlos by wearing a human-rights badge on the podium. The way he describes his actions, this was a matter of decency and common sense. Having grown up in a Salvation Army family and witnessed discrimination against Indigenous Australians, he was disgusted by injustice and instinctively understood what the pair were trying to achieve.

The documentary looks at a well-



Heavy medal: Norman, Smith and Carlos

chronicled historical event from a fresh perspective. It's partly a study in friendship – the three athletes remained intensely loyal to one another after 1968 – but the director is also paying tribute to an uncle to whom he was clearly devoted (he is reportedly now planning a dramatised version of *Salute*). Thankfully, the tone isn't too solemn or hagiographical but reflects its subject's own personality: Peter Norman was resilient, stubborn and humorous. Some of the footage – of Norman's funeral, for example, where Smith and Carlos carried his coffin – is shakily shot, with a home-movie quality to it. This isn't an especially polished piece of filmmaking but it conveys effectively enough the story of how Norman's life was transformed by what happened during that 1968 medal ceremony. There are some wonderfully uplifting moments along the way, such as an account of how legendary black American athletes including Ed Moses and Michael Johnson feted Norman at a time when the Australian authorities were ignoring him. Interviewed shortly before his death, Norman (as you would expect) shows absolutely no regret for supporting Smith and Carlos, even though he effectively sabotaged his own athletics career in the process.

Credits

Produced by
Matt Norman
David Redman
Written by
Matt Norman
Director of
Photography
Martin Smith
Editors
Jane Moran
John Leonard
Composer/
Original Music
David Hirschfelder
Sound Design
Mike Slater
Scott Findlay

©Film Finance
Corporation
Australia Limited,

Film Victoria
and Salute The
Movie Pty Ltd
Production
Companies
Film Finance
Corporation
Australia in
association with
Instinct Eden Rock
International, Film
Victoria and Instinct
Distribution
The Actors Cafe
in association
with Instinct
Entertainment
present a Matt
Norman film
Produced with
the assistance of

Film Victoria
Executive
Producers
Thomas Augsberger
Shana Levine
Dean Murphy

In Colour

Distributor
Verve Pictures Ltd

8,274 ft +8 frames

Synopsis

The story of Australian sprinter Peter Norman, who won a silver medal at the 1968 Mexico Olympics. After the race, winner Tommie Smith and bronze medallist John Carlos made black-power salutes as they received their medals. As the documentary reveals, Norman was fully supportive of Smith and Carlos's gesture. Coming from a poor but socially aware background, he related closely to their cause, and wore an 'Olympic Project for Human Rights' badge when he appeared next to them on the podium. It was Norman who suggested that they share the black gloves used in their salute, after Carlos left his gloves in the Olympic Village.

The International Olympic Committee was outraged by the salute. Norman was ostracised by the Australian selectors and never ran for his country again. However, the three athletes became firm friends and Norman was held in high esteem by black American athletes, who feted him at the 2000 Sydney Olympics when the Australian organisers ignored him. Norman died in 2006. Carlos and Smith were pallbearers at his funeral.

Samsara

USA 2011

Director: Ron Fricke

Certificate 12A 102m 10s



Reincarnational geographic: 'Samsara'

Reviewed by Anton Bitel

Ron Fricke's *Samsara* is named for a Sanskrit word (literally 'to flow on') used in a number of eastern religions to denote the endless cycle of life, death and rebirth. In keeping with this cyclical spirit, not only do images of circles here abound (timelapsed stars sweeping across the heavens, massed pilgrims circling the Kaaba in Mecca, a line of female Chinese dancers forming a ring of multiple arms) but the film itself adopts the organising structure of ring composition, bookending its disparate, transglobal 'scenes' between twinned sequences in which a group of shaven-headed monks are shown first forming (from multicoloured powders) and then erasing an elaborately crafted representation of the 'wheel of life' which, for Tibetan Buddhists like these, symbolises the principle of samsara. Even this creation and erasure of the powdery 'wheel', coming from and returning to dust, is made an apt emblem for the transience of the phenomenal world – a theme reinforced by images of rocks forming from flowing volcanic magma, and of half-buried communities reclaimed by the sand from which they once sprang. Also at the film's opening and close are sequences of costumed girls dancing, their youth and movements capturing the fugitive nature of time.

Between this beginning and end – and Fricke and his co-writer Mark Magidson are positing a worldview where things are always in a fleeting state of 'between' – comes a spectacular kaleidoscope of (mostly) human experience in all its variety and vanity, choreographed around a series of striking oppositions: nature and culture, spirituality and materialism, crowd and individual, luxury and poverty, war and peace. We are even shown an audience in a theatre, while in another scene two of the filmmakers are seen reflected in the eyes of an African tribeswoman, as though to underline that *Samsara* itself is included within its own all-encompassing purview. Despite the absence of narrative or dialogue, the editing lays out its own free-associative agenda, setting (for example) the tentacular curls of a woman's dreadlocks against the convolutions of a metropolitan spaghetti junction, or the adjustments of plastic surgery against the chilly perfection of (sex) dolls. Some of these

evocative contrasts arise from studied match cuts, while others, such as that of a slum area and the opulent city towering above it, are achieved merely by tilting the camera. A few overtly 'staged' scenes, however, such as the man in the office (Olivier de Sagazan) who masks his face in layers of primitive makeup, or the geisha (Kikumaru) who delicately sheds a tear to camera, seem out of place in an otherwise largely documentary film where the editing alone furnishes commentary enough.

Shot by Fricke in glorious 70mm at a variety of locations and speeds, *Samsara* comes with a dazzling visual beauty that demands to be seen on the big screen. It is, however, likely to divide its viewers into those who get right on board for its wide-eyed hippie trip (accompanied by an eclectic soundtrack of 'world music' and electronica), and those who find some of its easy juxtapositions and New Age sensibilities just a little facile, while wondering what advance it makes on previous non-verbal cosmo-anthropological eye-candy like *Koyaanisqatsi* (1982, shot by Fricke), *Baraka* (1992, shot, directed, co-edited and co-written by Fricke) and *Body Song* (2003), all of which *Samsara* decidedly recycles without ever quite renewing. Perhaps it's just another case of what goes around comes around.

Credits

Produced by
Mark Magidson
Concept/
Treatment
Written by
Ron Fricke
Mark Magidson
Edited by
Ron Fricke
Mark Magidson
Original Music
Composed by
Michael Stearns
Lisa Gerrard
Marcello De Francis
Sound Design
Michael Stearns

Miguel Rivera

©Magidson
Films, Inc.
Production
Companies
Oscilloscope
Laboratories
presents a
Mark Magidson
production
A Ron Fricke film
A production of
Magidson Films, Inc.

Dolby Surround
7.1/Datasat

Digital Sound
In Colour
[2.35:1]

Distributor
Arrow Films
9,195 ft +0 frames

Synopsis

Spectacular scenes of humanity and nature are mixed in a non-verbal essay on the transience and cyclical nature of life.

Shadow Dancer

United Kingdom/Ireland/France 2012

Director: James Marsh

Certificate 15 101m 37s

Reviewed by Trevor Johnston

It's a defining characteristic of James Marsh's work that his films always exude a strong sense of place. In his documentaries, this has enabled him to create an immersive environment for his stories, purposefully blurring the joins between archive footage and canny reconstruction when he took us inside Philippe Petit and crew's unique assault on the Twin Towers in *Man on Wire* (2008) or deftly moved between the various experimental and domestic spaces in his bizarre true-life primate saga *Project Nim* (2011). The same holds true of his fictional output, where the dramatic conflicts he's chosen to explore are inextricably woven into their surroundings, whether it's the US Bible Belt's heady brew of Christianity and hypocrisy in *The King* (2005), a 1980 Yorkshire rendered as a moral quagmire in his section of the *Red Riding* trilogy (2009), or indeed the clash of loyalties played out against the Troubles in Northern Ireland in this latest offering.

Since it's based on the first novel by Tom Bradby, ITN's Belfast correspondent from 1993-96, a certain authenticity may be expected here. Certainly, the material is thematically spot-on in zeroing in on the agonising dilemma facing Andrea Riseborough's single mother, who, after being caught planting an IRA bomb in London, faces years in an English jail – or the prospect of turning MI5 informant. With an infant son at home in Belfast and her brother's terrorist activity the object of secret-service scrutiny, the price of her pragmatic self-preservation could well turn out to be betraying both her political beliefs and her own family members. One doesn't necessarily have to be on the same ideological wavelength to sense the wrenching anguish this entails, and it's really the core strength of the piece that while remaining briskly unsentimental it communicates the human cost for everyone involved.

At the centre of it all, Riseborough's performance is simply outstanding, since she signals to the audience everything she's feeling yet never gives herself away to the rest of her household. Here an effective prologue depicting the tragically early loss of her younger brother to a British Army bullet gives credence to both the drawn watchfulness of her mother (the great Brid Brennan, impeccable as ever) and the fiery dedication to the Republican cause displayed by her older sibling Gerry (Aidan Gillen, slightly constrained in a supporting role). With Clive Owen at his steeliest as her MI5 minder, the story is set up to put the squeeze on Riseborough's necessarily resilient Colette, as Marsh's mobile camerawork barrels through an effective series of suspense set pieces in which the heroine clandestinely collates information on a terror group's activity at no little risk to herself, and indeed her somewhat gentler soul of a brother (Domhnall Gleeson, expertly cast), who soon comes under suspicion.

In the process, however, the narrative sets up a difficult obstacle for itself, since the possibility of saving Colette from a fatal unmasking depends on coming up with some alternative suspects, and given the narrow



Troubles and strife: Clive Owen, Andrea Riseborough

range of characters involved, options may be limited to the predictable or even the frankly unbelievable in such tricky circumstances. It's fair to say that *Shadow Dancer* hardly survives its big reveal with credibility intact, but since it's delivered enough tension and grit in the run-up, many viewers will feel forgiving.

True, the Dublin locations won't necessarily convince Belfast natives (your reviewer included), but on the level of making particular surroundings for individual scenes work for the film, Marsh is really on top of his game here. The floor-length net curtains in the hotel where Riseborough is taken for

debriefing following her initial arrest are so blankly oppressive that they're almost a form of psychological warfare in themselves, while the woody domesticity of the family kitchen in the opening scene plays brilliantly against the shocking carnage about to unfold. Like the finely judged scenes following the prison officer's anxious home life in Steve McQueen's *Hunger* (2008), these moments show that Marsh has grasped the jarring disjunction between quotidian ordinariness and sudden bloodshed which marked life for anyone in the orbit of Northern Ireland's Troubles during those calamitous years.

Credits

Produced by
Chris Coen
Producers
Andrew Lowe
Ed Guiney
Screenplay
Tom Bradby
Based on his novel
Director of Photography
Rob Hardy
Film Editor
Jinx Godfrey
Production Designer
Jon Henson
Music
Dickon Hinchliffe
Sound Mixer
Mervyn Moore
Costume Designer
Lorna Marie Mugan

©Shadow Dancer Rights Limited/
BBC/The British Film Institute/Wild Bunch
Production Companies
BFI and BBC Films present a Unanimous Entertainment/Element Pictures/Wild Bunch production in association with LipSync Productions

with the participation of Bord Scannán na hÉireann/
Irish Film Board
Developed by Unanimous Entertainment
Produced with the support of investment incentives for the Irish film industry provided by the government of Ireland
Made with the support of BBC Films, The National Lottery through the British Film Institute's Film Fund

Cast
Andrea Riseborough
Collette
Aidan Gillen
Gerry
Domhnall Gleeson
Connor
Brid Brennan
Ma
David Wilmut
Kevin Mulville
Stuart Graham
Ian Gilmore
Martin McCann
Brendan

Gillian Anderson
Kate Fletcher
Clive Owen
Mac
Barry Barnes
Gerry Senior
Maria Laird
young Colette
Ben Smyth
Sean

In Colour
[2.35:1]

Distributor
Paramount Pictures UK

9,145 ft +8 frames

Synopsis

Strife-torn Belfast, 1973. Schoolgirl Colette McVeigh sends her little brother Sean on an errand; he is shot during a British army incursion, and his death leaves her guilt-stricken.

London, 1993. Colette is apprehended by the British secret service after abandoning an unexploded bomb at an underground station. MI5 agent Mac identifies her as a potential informant; he threatens her with prison in England unless she returns to Belfast to report on her brother Gerry's IRA cell. Colette reluctantly agrees and Mac relocates to Ulster to initiate a weekly rendezvous. Colette provides a tip-off about the gang's proposed hit on an RUC detective, whereupon a mystery assailant shoots gunman Brendan outside the policeman's house, causing IRA commander Kevin Mulville to suspect they have an informant in their midst. The secret service kill Brendan in hospital to ensure his silence. Mac guesses correctly that his boss Kate Fletcher is now running her own separate informant in the same gang – and she hints that Colette is disposable. Kevin subjects Colette's gentle sibling Connor to water torture but realises that he's innocent. Mac trawls the files to discover that Colette's mother (codenamed 'Shadow Dancer') has been passing information for years. He calls Colette to warn her but her mother answers, and realises that she must now reveal herself in order to throw the scent off her daughter. Colette's mother is killed by the IRA and Mac prepares to help Colette escape, only to die in a car bomb set by Connor, who drives off to a new life with Colette and her son.

Step Up Miami Heat

USA 2012
Director: Scott Speer

Reviewed by Sophie Mayer

Step Up franchise producer Adam Shankman is a judge on *So You Think You Can Dance*, which provides two of this film's performers: Kathryn McCormick as female lead Emily, and Stephen 'tWitch' Boss as Jason, returning from *Step Up 3D* (2010). This mutual feedback cycle between the TV and film franchises reveals and exploits a hitherto unexpected appetite for dance, from ballet to B-boy. The *Step Up* franchise also stirs into the mix the American teen version of *Romeo and Juliet*, extending back at least to *Dirty Dancing* (1987), wherein a poor little rich girl falls for a boy from the wrong side of the tracks. Dance talks across class barriers, but *Step Up Miami Heat* also claims that it can express political protest, as 'the Mob' – dancers from the wrong side – rise up against the rich girl's greedy developer father. The dance, while fast and furious, is unlikely to trouble Wim Wenders, making little use of 3D and rarely expanding – as *Pina* did – into background or foreground.

It's also trapped in the loop of the film's narrative, whereby dance is performed to garner YouTube hits, which increase via TV coverage and finally secure a Nike advertising deal. The live charge that attracted audiences to dance media, of bodies moving with virtuosity and passion, gets lost.

Credits

Produced by Adam Shankman Jennifer Gibgot Patrick Wachsberger Erik Feig	Production Companies Summit Entertainment presents an Offspring Entertainment production	Trip Ryan Peter Gallagher Mr Anderson Mia Michaels Olivia Michael 'Xeno' Langebeck Mercury Claudio Pinto Francisco
Written by Amanda Brody Based on characters created by Duane Adler	Executive Producers Bob Hayward David Garrett Meredith Milton Jon M. Chu Matthew Smith Nan Morales	Dolby Digital/ Datasat In Colour [2.35:1]
Director of Photography Crash		Some screenings presented in 3D
Editors Matthew Friedman Avi Youabian	Cast Ryan Guzman Sean Asa Kathryn McCormick Emily Anderson Misha Gabriel Eddy Cleopatra Coleman Penelope Stephen 'tWitch' Boss Jason Tommy Dewey	Distributor Universal Pictures International UK & Eire
Production Designer Carlos A. Menendez		US theatrical title Step Up Revolution Synopsis
Music Aaron Zigman Sound Mixers David J. Schwartz Mark Weber Costume Designer Rebecca Hoffherr Choreography Jamal Sims		
©Summit Entertainment, LLC		

Synopsis

Miami, the present. The Mob, a dance crew led by Cuban friends Sean and Eddy, perform dance spectacles for a YouTube competition. Sean falls for Emily, daughter of his boss, developer Bill Anderson. Emily plans a flash mob that goes viral, turning public opinion against her father's gentrification plans. But a further flash mob, led by Eddy, loses both public support and YouTube rankings, and splits Sean from Emily. For the ground-breaking ceremony for Bill's development, the Mob reunite for a final dance, prompting Bill to work with the community rather than destroy it.

Take This Waltz

Canada/France 2011
Director: Sarah Polley
Certificate 15 116m 25s



Away from him?: Luke Kirby, Michelle Williams

Reviewed by Catherine Wheatley

Sarah Polley's first directorial feature *Away from Her* (2006) told the heartbreaking tale of a long-married couple pondering their fidelity to each other as the wife's memory was gradually swallowed up by early-onset Alzheimer's disease. By contrast the marriage slowly unravelling in *Take This Waltz* belongs to 28-year-old bohemians Margot (a characteristically charismatic Michelle Williams) and Lou (an uncharacteristically sombre – and moving – Seth Rogen). She is some kind of freelance copywriter; he writes cookbooks exclusively about chicken. Five years into matrimony and well past love's first spring, the pair are entering – both literally and metaphorically – a sweltering, sticky summer.

Credits

Produced by Susan Cavan Sarah Polley Written by Sarah Polley Director of Photography Luc Montpellier Editor Christopher Donaldson Production Designer Matthew Davies Music Jonathan Goldsmith Supervising Sound Editor Jane Tattersall Costume Designer Lea Carlson	Central, Super Ecran and The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) Produced with the assistance of Canadian Film or Video Production Tax Credit, Ontario Media Development Corporation	Dolby Digital In Colour [1.85:1]
©Joe's Daughter Inc.		Distributor Studiocanal Limited
Production Companies Joe's Daughter & Mongrel Media present in association with TF1 Droits Audiovisuels With the participation of Telefilm Canada, Ontario Media Development Corporation and Astral's The Harold Greenberg Fund Produced in association with The Movie Network Movie		10,477 ft +8 frames
	Cast Michelle Williams Margot Seth Rogen Lou Luke Kirby Daniel Sarah Silverman Geraldine Jennifer Podemski Karen Diane D'Aquila Harriet Vanessa Coelho Tony Graham Abbey James Damien Atkins Aquitat instructor Aaron Abrams Aaron Dyan Bell Dyan Albert Howell Albert	

Synopsis

Canada, the present. During a business trip to Nova Scotia, 28-year-old Margot flirts with handsome stranger Daniel, then learns to her consternation that he lives on the same Toronto street as she does. After sharing a taxi from the airport, the pair part regretfully as Margot returns to the home she shares – mostly contentedly – with husband Lou, a cookery-book writer. Margot has a deep affection for Lou and his extended family, especially his sister Geraldine, a recovering alcoholic. Nonetheless she is drawn to Daniel, who pulls a rickshaw to fund his work as an artist. She starts leaving the house at the same time as he does; he appears unexpectedly during her aquarobics session. They meet for coffee and then for cocktails, go swimming together and spend a day at the fairground. As the summer passes, the sexual tension between Margot and Daniel heightens but Margot is unwilling to cheat on Lou – despite the growing distance between them – and the friendship remains chaste.

Lou and Margot host a party to celebrate Geraldine's sobriety, to which Lou invites Daniel. Daniel tells Margot that their ambiguous relationship has become unbearable to him. The next morning he moves out of his house. A distraught Margot confesses her feelings to Lou before leaving him to move in with Daniel.

Months pass and Margot and Daniel's passion gives way to a comfortable, contented routine. When Geraldine relapses, Margot and Lou are briefly thrown together again. Although it appears that Margot feels some regret about the choice she made, the pair part amicably. A final sequence shows Margot alone at the fairground.

That's My Boy

USA 2012
Director: Sean Anders
Certificate 15 114m 16s

Reviewed by Vadim Rizov

Spoiler Alert

Traditionally, Adam Sandler stands up for the bullied and the oppressed, as in his first vehicle *Billy Madison* (1995), where he peed his pants in solidarity with an embarrassed third-grader. It's a characteristic that has made even the shoddiest vehicle easier to defend as at least promoting a vague message of tolerance. Not so *That's My Boy*, in which Sandler is a boorish bully. A prologue introduces the 12-year-old version of his character, Donny Berger, whose affair with a teacher – ending when they're discovered mid-coitus at a school assembly – brings him dubious fame in the 1980s: a cover story in *Teen Beat*, a TV biopic starring Alan Thicke and Ian Ziering.

But now Donny is washed up and nostalgic



Paternal sunshine: Adam Sandler

Kirby's character is little more than a beautiful, balletic cipher, his lack of friends or family making him a perfect receptacle for Margot's doubts and longings. Indeed, one might speculate about whether he's even real. If the coincidence of Daniel and Margot's meet-cute – having exchanged neat barbs during a business trip they are seated next to one another on the plane home, before discovering that they live on the same street – seems somewhat far-fetched, elsewhere too the film stretches the limits of credibility. At the film's close we certainly seem to slip into fantasy, as Margot whirls and spins alone on a fairground attraction. The dialogue also takes on a phony air at times, the subtext barely masked by stagey lines such as Margot's admission to Daniel, referring to air travel, that "I'm scared of connections."

The film's trappings are occasionally a little gauche, then. And this isn't helped by the too-cool urban-hipster set-up, all kitsch chintz, clutter and quirk (the gamine Margot only drinks milk or martinis, and feigns illness at airports to mask her neuroses). But at the film's heart are some brutal insights into female ageing and subjectivity. Showering after a session of aquarobics, Margot's lithe body is starkly contrasted with the naked forms of her fellow swimmers – all pubes, boobs, bellies and cellulite – suggesting a sense of ripeness turning to decay. A girl-woman who committed to marriage age 23 but at 28 sees a pet as a step too far; whose husband thinks nothing of kissing her while she's on the loo but who closes his eyes when he talks to her: small wonder that Margot is so readily seduced by the possibility of being desired, of being *seen*. The scales first tip in Daniel's favour when he describes in intricate detail exactly how he would make love to her, beginning with the tender detail that "I'd kiss each of your eyelids, and then your birthmark." Compare that to Lou's devastating throwaway remark: "I don't need to ask how you are. I spend every day with you."

Williams gave a powerful performance as a disillusioned working-class wife in *Blue Valentine* (2010). Although Polley's film is far less gritty, Williams arguably outdoes herself here. Solipsistic, self-absorbed, the girl who has it all and yet still isn't satisfied, Margot could easily have been a very unlikeable character (there are unkind names for girls who behave towards men like Margot does, and tease is the least of them). Instead, she emerges as the film's victim. A montage of passing months shows her and Daniel moving through various sexual positions and partners, threesomes and foursomes and eventually ending up exactly where the film started. For all the sense of possibility and potential, of doubt and regret, the wheel of fate turns and Margot lands in the same place every time. In many ways, Margot is a modern day Blanche DuBois, implicitly echoing the latter's cry that "I don't want realism... I want magic! Yes, yes, magic!" Yet ultimately, the bittersweet truth of Polley's beautiful film is that it's inevitable: no matter who we love, we are always ourselves, and with it we are always alone.

for the pop-culture detritus of his heyday. More urgently, he owes \$43,000 in back taxes to the IRS and turns to estranged son Han Solo (the product of his pupil-teacher affair), who has renamed himself Todd Peterson and is a successful broker. Todd (Andy Samberg) is about to marry fiancée Jamie at his boss's Cape Cod house and is understandably unhappy when Donny shows up with a trash bag containing all the essentials for a weekend stay: a pair of nunchucks, a strip of condoms and a tallboy of bargain-basement brew Natural Ice. This kicks off a scenario reminiscent of Rodney Dangerfield's 1986 vehicle *Back to School*, as Sandler's tramp charms the wedding party by bringing back the 'Wassup' tagline from Budweiser's 1999-2002 advertising campaign.

Todd is initially furious to be reunited with his irresponsible dad, who let him eat as much cake and candy as he wanted as a child, leading to obesity and diabetes, but eventually comes around during a lengthy bachelor-party sequence. Convenience stores are trashed, bowling alleys infested, children's bicycles stolen. "Classic night," Donny sums up in a self-satisfied tone.

Donny's tiresome ranting about the importance of having a good time ("Your whole aura is that of a pussy") is just one manifestation of a wearisome monomania. For *That's My Boy*, purposeless aggression and self-righteous irresponsibility will always end in prosperity. The final image couldn't be clearer: on the verge of going to jail for unpaid taxes, Sandler is bailed out when a bet placed on a morbidly obese marathon contestant pays off. As the fat man defies all known medical facts to win the race, the message is plain: party, act badly, scorn responsibility as the realm of pussies, and good things will follow. For better and mostly worse, *That's My Boy* is a truly American film.

Credits

Produced by
Adam Sandler
Jack Giarraputo
Heather Parry
Allen Covert
Written by
David Caspe
Director of Photography
Brandon Trost
Editor
Tom Costain
Production Designer
Aaron Osborne
Music
Rupert Gregson-Williams
Sound Mixer
Richard Kite
Costume Designer
Ellen Lutter

©Columbia Pictures Industries, Inc. and Beverly Blvd LLC
Production Companies
Columbia Pictures presents in association with Relativity Media a Happy Madison production
Executive Producers
Barry Bernardi

John Morris
Dennis Dugan
Tim Herlihy

Cast
Adam Sandler
Donny Berger
Andy Samberg
Han Solo, 'Todd'
Leighton Meester
Jamie
Vanilla Ice
himself
Tony Orlando
Steve Spirou
Will Forte
Phil
Milo Ventimiglia
Chad
Susan Sarandon
Mary McGarricle (present day)
James Caan
Father McNally
Blake Clark
Gerald
Nick Swardson
Kenry
Eva Amurri Martino
Mary McGarricle (in past)
Meagen Fay
Helen

Ana Gasteyer
Mrs Ravensdale

Dolby Digital/ Datasat Digital Sound/SDDS In Colour [2.35:1]

Distributor
Sony Pictures Releasing

10,284 ft +0 frames

Synopsis

Boston, 1984. Twelve-year-old Donny Berger hits on teacher Mary McGarricle, who gives him detention. The two begin a relationship. Their affair is discovered, and pregnant McGarricle is sentenced to 30 years in jail. Donny becomes a celebrity, and is given custody of their son Han Solo.

Boston, the present. With the notoriety that made him a star long gone, Donny owes \$43,000 to the IRS and is estranged from his son. Talk-show host Randall Morgan offers him \$50,000 if he can convince Han Solo (who now calls himself Todd) to join him for a televised reunion at the prison where McGarricle is serving her sentence. Donny tracks down Todd, who is about to marry fiancée Jamie at his boss Steve's house in Cape Cod. Todd is unhappy to see his uncouth father, but the pair bond during a bachelor party. Donny has a change of heart about the talk-show reunion, but Todd – unaware that it's a television stunt – drives to the prison before Donny can stop him. Confronted by the TV cameras, Todd furiously tells Donny to stay out of his life.

Overhearing Jamie on the phone, Donny mistakes her conversation for a chat with a lover. Denouncing her in front of the wedding party, he learns that she was talking with a journalist. He goes to her hotel room to apologise and discovers her having sex with her brother. He forces her to confess to Todd. Father and son walk away together. A long-shot bet on a marathon contestant pays Donny's back taxes.

The Three Stooges

USA 2012

Directors: Peter Farrelly, Bobby Farrelly
Certificate PG 91m 38s

Reviewed by Nicolas Rapold

The Farrelly brothers haven't been as successful as the comedies they helped spawn with *There's Something About Mary* (1998), even as their influence remains visible everywhere in the explicitly depicted embarrassments suffered on a monthly basis by the hapless bros of contemporary American comedy. Since *Stuck on You* (2003), the Farrellys have made one remake (2007's *The Heartbreak Kid*, a choice that illuminates one strand of their own comedy DNA), one original film with a conventional premise suggesting an assignment bestowed on acknowledged heroes (last year's *Hall Pass*), and finally this improbable feature-length attempt to revive beloved routines perfected nearly a century ago on vaudeville boards.

Contemplated by the Farrellys for at least 12 years, their sweet-hearted Stooges film turns out to be the rare resurrected 'property' whose performers live up to the skills and appeal of their predecessors. Larry (Sean Hayes), Moe (Chris Diamantopoulos) and Curly (Will Sasso) are more than dress-up tribute acts: the three TV comedians, compelling physical matches, smoothly display the timing and dexterity that go into a nudnik symphony for eye (poke), nose (pinch) and head (bonk), all accompanied by requisite foley effects.

But this is no two-reeler, which means distinct stooge fatigue – more or less depending on the viewer's tolerance for this acquired, or perhaps increasingly lost, taste – and a certain amount of plot maintenance. Raised in an orphanage, the trio in this telling must strike out into the brave new world at large in order to save their nun-run home from foreclosure. Their need for cash makes them prey for a buxom goldigger (Sofia Vergara) looking to off her wealthy husband. Moe's fortuitous casting in a reality show, alongside actual *Jersey Shore* regulars, adds a contemporary 'update' that



Chris Diamantopoulos, Will Sasso, Sean Hayes

amounts to Farrelly brothers meta-criticism.

The murder scheme, though pitched as a mercy killing, seems an odd fit for the naive brothers, who are "pure of heart and dim of wit", as one nun puts it. (Jane Lynch, deadpan as Mother Superior, and Larry David, kvetching in drag, are two welcome screen sisters.) And the stooges have been, to use J. Hoberman's term, "deracinated" from immigrant ethnic origins. They're still out of touch (all thumbs, for example, around an iPhone) but here more simply resemble overgrown kids at heart, ignorant because isolated, and consequently less rich as comic characters.

But the Farrellys, who seem most excited staging a baby-weeing sequence in a maternity ward, and who make free use of CGI for demanding cartoon-like stunts, evidently hold the Stooges close to heart, as if the endeavour takes the fraternal filmmakers back to their own formative squabbles.

360

Director: Fernando Meirelles
Certificate 15 110m 10s

Reviewed by Kate Stables

Perhaps screenwriter Peter Morgan shouldn't have admitted to using the play *Reigen* (best known in Ophul's 1950 adaptation *La Ronde*) as the inspiration for 360's vapid global roundelay of temptations and emotional crises. Remembering Schnitzler's sharp, clinically observed chain of Viennese belle-époque couplings throws this sprawling tale of a queue of international sinners and innocents into unkind relief. In place of the "romantic contagion" the press notes promise, the film sets characters' diverse actions – ranging from a missed rendezvous with a prostitute in Vienna to a sex-offender's temptation at Denver airport – bumping into one another across eight international borders.

What the film does share with *Reigen* is an interest in transience, though here it's people that are in constant motion rather than lust. Director Fernando Meirelles's visuals work overtime to emphasise this restlessness, bouncing from faceless hotels to grim motorways to teeming airports, split screens showily emphasising the travel transitions, in that palette of steely greys and blues that signals soulless contemporary chic. It's nicely done but rather obvious stuff, especially when a lonely Parisian dentist stretches out a hand to stroke the tiny image of the airborne plane carrying away his unknowing love.

Morgan and Meirelles are mining the we-are-all-connected seam familiar from the pan-global *Babel* (2006), but in their efforts to keep things metaphorical rather than melodramatic they periodically allow the connections to become tenuous. The knock-on effects from an Englishwoman's adultery, which triggers a Brazilian girlfriend's flight home and her drunken pass at a dangerous American stranger, feel like a game of emotional tag, albeit slightly contrived. But when the narrative passes from Anthony Hopkins's father of a disappeared daughter to an unhappily married Russian Parisian in the same Denver AA meeting, it's fumbled. Since the film opens with an earnest voiceover about "a fork in the road", we understand that each chapter hinges on a character's crucial decision, not a sexual relay. Still, for a film whose choices feature adultery, infidelity, grand larceny and double murder, its events and outcomes seem often colourless and low in tension.

When the film does jerk gloriously to life at certain points one is reminded sharply of the vitality of Meirelles's *City of God* (2002), particularly when the ending takes an abrupt but plausible turn into thriller territory. Even better is a sweaty earlier sequence, where Ben Foster's tightly wound recovering sex-offender is filled with uneasy temptation by everything from a child's nearby foot to an unconscious woman in a hotel room. Foster somehow produces an ambiguous, multifaceted character from a few eye-darting, palm-rubbing close-ups in a handful of scenes. The rest of the performances are as sketchy as the characters, apart from some eloquent underplaying from Rachel Weisz's adulteress and a grandstanding piece of

Credits

Produced by
Bradley Thomas
Charles B. Wessler
Bobby Farrelly
Peter Farrelly
Written by
Mike Cerrone
Bobby Farrelly
Peter Farrelly
Director of Photography
Matthew F. Leonetti
Editor
Sam Seig
Production Designer
Arlan Jay Vetter
Music
John Debney
Production Sound Mixer
Steve Cantamessa
Costume Designer
Denise Wingate

©Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation and Dune Entertainment III LLC (in all territories except Brazil, Italy, Japan, Korea and Spain)
©TCF Hungary Film Rights Exploitation

Limited Liability Company, Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation and Dune Entertainment III LLC (in Brazil, Italy, Japan, Korea and Spain)
Production Companies
A Conundrum Entertainment/
Charles B. Wessler Entertainment production in association with C3 Entertainment
A Farrelly Brothers movie
Made in association with Dune Entertainment
Made with assistance from The Georgia Film, Music & Digital Entertainment Office
Executive Producers
Earl M. Benjamin
Robert N. Benjamin
Marc S. Fischer

Cast
Sean Hayes
Larry

Will Sasso
Curly
Chris Diamantopoulos
Moe
Jane Lynch
mother superior
Sofia Vergara
Lydia
Jennifer Hudson
Sister Rosemary
Craig Bierko
Mac
Stephen Collins
Mr Harter
Larry David
Sister Mary-Mengele
Kirby Heyborne
Teddy
Carly Craig
Mrs Harter
Kate Upton
Sister Bernice

Dolby Digital In Colour [1.85:1]

Distributor
20th Century Fox International (UK)

8,247 ft +0 frames

Synopsis

US, the present. Larry, Moe and Curly are left as babies on the doorstep of an orphanage run by nuns. A rich couple offer to adopt young Moe, but it falls through when Moe demands they take Larry and Curly too. Another boy, Teddy, is adopted instead.

Years later the grown-up Larry, Moe and Curly still live at the orphanage, which is now under threat of foreclosure. The trio leave to earn money to pay off the debt. They meet Lydia, who – along with her lover Mac – is plotting to kill her husband. She hires them as hitmen; they inadvertently injure Mac, mistaking him for Lydia's husband. At the hospital, they try to finish off the murder. However, while escaping from the police they run into Teddy – who is Lydia's husband. On the run, the stooges argue and separate; the producers of a reality show see it all, and take on Moe as a cast member. While Moe finds success, Larry and Curly look for him back at the orphanage. At the law firm of the rich man who adopted Teddy, Larry and Curly learn of Moe's sacrifice as a child. The stooges reunite on the set of the reality show.

At Lydia and Teddy's anniversary party, the stooges try to expose the murder plot but it turns out that Teddy's father is involved too. After much fuss, and a car accident involving all parties, the guilty are jailed, and the orphanage is rebuilt with Moe's earnings from the reality show. Teddy marries the secretary at his father's law firm.

storytelling ("I was busted, disgusted and not to be trusted") by Anthony Hopkins that stops the film in its tracks, but not in a good way.

Overall, one longs pointlessly for *360* to have covered less mileage but in more depth, to swap its over-long, episodic structure and well-worn message of global connectivity for something chewier and more concentrated. The film's most affecting story is the near-miss romance between a widowed dentist and his unhappily married assistant. It could have been told within 50 square feet of office space. Stories, like fruit, often taste better without air miles.

Credits

Produced by

Andrew Eaton
David Linde
Emanuel Michael
Danny Krausz
Chris Hanley
Marc Missonnier
Olivier Delbosc

Screenplay

Peter Morgan

Director of

Photography

Adriano Goldman

Editor

Daniel Rezende

Production

Designer

John Paul Kelly

Sound Recordist

Stuart Wilson

Costume Designer

Monika Buttinger

©[TBC]

Production

Companies

BBC Films, The
UK Film Council,
ORF, Unison Films,
Gravity Pictures and
Hero Entertainment
present in
association with
Prescience, EOS
Pictures, Wild
Bunch, Film Location

Austria, Austrian
Film Institute and
Vienna Film Fund
a Revolution/
Dor Film/Fidélité
Films production
in co-production
with O2 Films in
association with
Muse Productions
A film by Fernando
Meirelles

Executive

Producers

Christine Langan

Klaus Lintschinger

Peter Morgan

Fernando Meirelles

Jordan Gertner

Paul Brett

Tim Smith

David Faigenblum

Graham Bradstreet

Michael

Winterbottom

Steven Gagnon

Nikhil Sharma

Chris Contogouris

Valentina
Gabriela
Marcinkova
Anna
Jamel Debbouze
Algerian man
Johannes Krisch
Rocco

Jude Law

Michael Daly

Juliano Cazarré

Rui

Lucia Siposová

Blanca

Maria Flor

Laura

Marianne

Jean-Baptiste

Fran

Mark Ivanir

the boss

Moritz Bleibtreu

salesman

Rachel Weisz

Rose

Vladimir

Vodvichenkov

Sergei

Truth or Dare

UK 2011

Director: Robert Heath

Certificate 15 95m 27s

Reviewed by Kim Newman

Adopting the model of 1980s slasher films, *Truth or Dare* opens with a group of irresponsible young people humiliating and abusing an outsider to the point where a vengeance-crazed killing spree is inevitable. It has always been a problem with this set-up that the initial persecution pits the audience against characters for whom they need to feel some sympathy later on in order for the suspense mechanics to work. This is compounded here by the fact that the obnoxious student crowd of the opening party sequence are so despicable it's painful to spend time with them. In a straight slasher film, there's some sadistic fun to be had from the punishment of bullies, but going the torture route, as *Truth or Dare* does, defuses that simple, nasty pleasure.

After its clichéd student-party opening, the film relocates to a gothic estate and brings on a charismatic villain in David Oakes's aristocratic soldier, a homophobic medieval throwback who uses War on Terror interrogation methods to get to the bottom of his brother Felix's death. Oakes single-handedly lifts the film, but has little to play off. However, it is mildly unusual that the only character who shows any human feeling for victim Felix – Florence Hall's Gemma – isn't the 'final girl', and the nastiest of the culprits survives the night.

Credits

Produced by

Richard Johns
Rupert Jermyn
Written by
Matthew McGuchan

Director of

Photography

James Friend

Editor

Oliver Parker

Production

Designer

John Bramble

Composer

Richard Pryn

Production

Sound Mixer

Nigel Albermaniche

Costume Designer

Raquel Azevedo

©Truth or Dare

Film Ltd

Production

Companies

Corona Pictures
presents in
association with
AV Pictures

Executive

Producers

Matthew Boyes

Gail Crocker

Toby Jermyn

Angad Paul

Victor Bateman

Lee Brazier

Chris Hainsworth

Carlo Dusi

Florence Hall

Gemma

Jennie Jacques

Eleanor

Tom Kane

Felix

Jason Maza

Jonesy

David Sterne

Woodbridge

Alexander Vlahos

Luke

Mark Underwood

cashier

Made in Dagenham (2010) explored the 1968 Ford sewing machinists' strike. By comparison *The Wedding Video* has very little agenda, being content simply to poke fun at the excesses of the nouveau-riche Cheshire set – 'the Beverly Hills of England' – which to date has featured more on TV than in cinema.

Beneath the comedy there's a criticism of the extravagance of contemporary spending on weddings, but in the main the film gets by thanks to its breezy combination of semi-improvisational performances and a well-trodden tale greatly enriched by a unique storytelling point of view.

Credits

Produced by
James Gay-Rees
Written by
Tim Firth
Cinematography
Ben Cole
Simon Tindall
Mark Nutkins
Editor
Laura Morrod
Production Designer
Kristian Milsted
Original Score
Written, Arranged & Mixed by/
All Instruments
Performed by
Matt Berry
Sound Recordists
Henry Milliner
Andy Shelley
Costume Designer
Ian Fulcher

©Squirrel Films
Limited
Production Companies
Entertainment
Film Distributors
and Timeless Films
present a Midfield
Films production
A Nigel Cole film
Made with the

support of the
National Lottery
through the UK
Film Council
Development Fund
Developed by
Working Title
and Pathé
Executive Producers
Nigel Green
Ralph Kamp

Cast
Rufus Hound
Raif
Lucy Punch
Saskia
Robert Webb
Tim
Matt Berry
Roger
Michelle Gomez
Jenna
Miriam Margolyes
Patricia
Harriet Walter
Alex
Kevin Eldon
Andrew, wine dealer
Angus Barnett
Reverend
Dobbs, vicar
Barry Jackson
Des

Felicity Dean
Jacqui
Julianne White
Tara

Dolby Digital
In Colour
[1.85:1]

Distributor
Entertainment
Film Distributors

Synopsis

Cheshire, the present. Raif returns after four years travelling in South America to be best man at his brother Tim's wedding. He decides to film the wedding preparations and the day itself, with the intention of giving the finished video as a wedding present. He is surprised to discover that the bride is one of his old school friends, the formerly wild Saskia. In the intervening years, Saskia's mother Alex has married a rich husband and is now part of an exclusive social set.

Alex takes over Tim and Saskia's wedding plans, imposing an extravagance on the day that the couple hadn't intended and placing a strain on their relationship. Frustrated at Tim's easygoing compliance with her mother's dominance, Saskia turns to Raif for support and the two rekindle their teenage friendship. They kiss, but swiftly dismiss this as a mistake.

On the day of the wedding, Raif tells Tim that he kissed Saskia. The brothers briefly brawl but Tim soon admits that he doesn't really want to marry. Rushing to get to Saskia before she arrives at the church, Raif declares his love for her and takes Tim's place as groom. Although the marriage isn't legally binding, the now contrite Alex hosts a flashy wedding celebration for Raif and Saskia.

The Women on the 6th Floor

France 2010
Director: Philippe Le Guay
12A 106m 10s

Reviewed by Hannah McGill

Philippe Le Guay's cuddly, simplistic comedy shares elements with Fernando Meirelles and Nando Olival's *Domésticas* (2001), which examined the oddities and intrigues involved in spending your life knee-deep in other people's private mess, and also Tate Taylor's *The Help* (2011), which emphasised in no uncertain terms the unsung saintliness of the unseen char and the burden of guilt shouldered by the waited-upon. It's more emotionally didactic, however, than either of these predecessors allowed itself to be. Le Guay's script, written with Jérôme Tonnerre, makes such brutally short work of its bourgeois characters – and turns its salt-of-the-earth below-stairs workers into such paragons of virtue – that it leaves no space for surprises or character development.

Fabrice Luchini – he of the owlish, clever gaze and earnest smiles – is endearing as the cloistered but curious Monsieur Joubert, while Natalia Verbeke has the qualities required to make maid Maria the sort of winsome-yet-feisty male fantasy-figure prone to showering with the door open and laughing with devastating girlishness if accidentally sprayed with water. But Joubert's wife is painted as such a one-dimensional monster of privilege – doomed on her every entrance to complain of an "exhausting" day passed in bourgeois repose and demand something unreasonable of her weary, obliging maid – that Joubert's betrayal, and his decision to move in with the maids on the sixth floor, are too easy to forgive. Even Joubert's young sons are portrayed as wholly disposable, since they are part of his privileged French life and not his free, wild Spanish one: when they ask him to come home, he blithely informs them that he's finally found his real family, and accuses



Steamy cleaner: Kiberlain, Luchini, Maura,

them of caring only about their inheritance.

This alarming ambivalence may be indicative of a particularly French attitude to the significance of male domestic responsibilities when pitted against the serious business of sexual passion with a younger woman – but it also represents an unfortunate block on the film's emotional complexity. Since we're pushed into believing that Madame Joubert has no worth or human feelings, and since Maria is painted as perfect in her availability and desirability alike, Joubert's choice between them has no weight.

Accept its simplistic worldview – hardworking proles are spontaneous, worthy, loving and good; people with white-collar jobs or big houses are morally bankrupt emotional zombies – and this film offers pleasures in the form of energetic performances and a cosy, old-fashioned atmosphere. The scenes in which Joubert instructs his baffled stockbroker colleagues on the daily woes of the maid community are delightful, and achieve the sort of sly social satire that elsewhere in the film is sentimentalised out of effectiveness.

Credits

Produced by
Philippe Rousselet
Screenplay/
Dialogue
Philippe Le Guay
Jérôme Tonnerre
Director of
Photography
Jean-Claude Larrieu
Editor
Monica Coleman
Art Director
Pierre-François
Limbosch
Music
Jorge Arriagada
Sound
Laurent Poirier
Vincent Guillon
Emmanuel Crosset
Costume Designer
Christian Gasc

©Vendome
Production, France
2 Cinéma, SND
Production Companies
Philippe Rousselet
presents a Vendome
Production, France
2 Cinéma, SND
co-production
With the participation
of Canal +,
CinéCinéma, France

Télévisions
In association with
La Banque Postale
Image 4, Cofinova
7, Uni Etoile 8

Cast
Fabrice Luchini
Jean-Louis Joubert
Sandrine Kiberlain
Suzanne Joubert
Natalia Verbeke
Maria
Carmen Maura
Concepción
Lola Dueñas
Carmen
Berta Ojea
Dolores
Nuria Sole
Teresa
Concha Galán
Pilar
Marie-Armelle Deguy
Colette de Bergeret
Muriel Solvay
Nicole de Grandcourt
Audrey Fleurot
Bettina de
Brossolette
Ivan Martin Salan
Miguel

Dolby Digital/DTS

In Colour
[1.85:1]
Subtitles

Distributor
Cinefile World

9,555 ft +0 frames

French theatrical title
Les Femmes du
6ème étage

Synopsis

Paris, the early 1960s. A group of Spanish domestics live on the sixth floor of an apartment building and serve the families living there. New to the group is young Maria, who takes a job with the stuck-up Jouberts, having given up an illegitimate child back in Spain. Her charm and fire attract staid accountant Jean-Louis Joubert, who begins to take an interest in the lives of the maids. His wife suspects him of having an affair with a ravishing client; he accepts her accusation and moves out, going to live upstairs with the maids. His sons, home from boarding school, try to convince him to come back but he refuses.

On a day trip to the country, Pilar, Maria's aunt, observes Jean-Louis's attentions to Maria; she tells Maria where her son is living and advises her to go back to Spain and find him. Maria tells Jean-Louis that she must leave; they make love, and he asks her to run away with him. The next day, the oblivious Mme Joubert attempts a reconciliation with Jean-Louis, who discovers, too late, that Maria has left without him.

Three years later Jean-Louis is driving a red convertible through the Spanish countryside. He visits one of the maids, Concepción, who has moved back to Spain with her new husband Fernando; Pilar is also there. They tell him they don't know where Maria is, and he leaves disappointed; Fernando pursues him to confide that Maria lives in a nearby town. Jean-Louis goes there and meets Maria's son Miguel, who speaks French. Maria emerges from her house and greets them with a smile.

Encounters

18TH ENCOUNTERS SHORT FILM AND ANIMATION FESTIVAL

18 – 23 SEPTEMBER BRISTOL, UK

SHORT FILMS BOLD IDEAS

Discover the best in short film and animation from across the globe at one of the UK's leading showcases of emerging talent. Six days packed with screenings, workshops, networking, special guests and gala events, with a dazzling programme spanning film, art, animation, performance and music.

HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE:

FOCUS ON FINLAND

PIONEERING STEREOSCOPIC WORK FROM 1930S RUSSIA

CONVERSATION WITH NICK PARK, DAVID SPROXTON AND PETER LORD OF AARDMAN ANIMATIONS

DIRECTORS UK PRESENTS SAM FELL

MASTER CLASSES FROM BAFTA AND THE NFTS

WORKSHOPS IN 3D FILMMAKING, CASTING, AND PITCHING.

Discover the full festival line-up and book Delegate Passes now online at:

ENCOUNTERS-FESTIVAL.ORG.UK

Find us on [f](#) [t](#) @EncountersSFF



The 21st Chichester International Film Festival

- PREMIERES, PREVIEWS & NEW RELEASES of the best in UK & WORLD CINEMA.

inc: **BELLE DU SEIGNEUR** (UK/France - Bander); **NOW IS GOOD** (UK - Parker)

HYSTERIA (UK - Wexler); **LAWLESS** (USA - Hillcott); **TABU** (Portugal - Gomes)

ON THE ROAD (USA - Salles); **SHADOW DANCER** (UK - Marsh); **ABOUT ELLY** (Iran - Farhadi)

JAGARNA IS2 (Norway - Sundvall); **FOURTH STATE** (Germany - Gansel).

- Launches with 2 Open Air Screenings: **GUYS & DOLLS** plus **BRAVE**.

- FOCUS ON THE DOCUMENTARY & TREASURES FROM THE ARCHIVE.

inc: **SAMSARA**, **REVEALING MR. MAUGHAM**, **F FOR FAKE**, **THE IMPOSTER**, **LIFE & DEATH OF COLONEL BLIMP**, **RED DESERT**, **THE LODGER**.

- OPENING & CLOSING GALAS in association with BRASSERIE BLANC:

(Opening Gala) **CLOUDBURST** (Canada); (Closing Gala) **HOPE SPRINGS** (USA)

- SPECIAL EVENTS inc: **PHANTOM OF THE OPERA** with Live Organist Accompaniment:

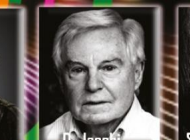
In Conversation with **VIRGINIA MCKENNA** & **AMANDA WARING**; Sydney Opera House Productions (**LA TRAVIATA** & **TURANDOT**); **SHAKESPEARE AT THE GLOBE**; **BEST OF FRIGHT FEST**; **LAURENCE OLIVIER & THE CHICHESTER FESTIVAL THEATRE**: **DEREK JACOBI**

introducing **LOVE IS THE DEVIL**; **SARAH MILES** introducing **TERM OF TRIAL**.

- Retrospective Tributes to **G. WITHERS**, **L. GILBERT** and **T. ANGELOPOULOS**; plus **LISI RUSSELL** introducing a **KEN RUSSELL** Tribute.

- AND SO MUCH MORE ...

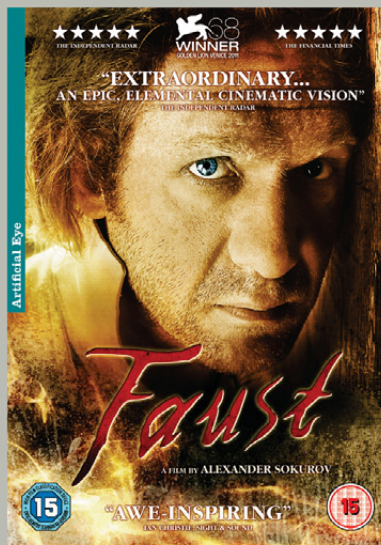
Thu 16 Aug - Sun 2 Sep 2012



www.chichesterfilmfestival.co.uk

Artificial Eye

New Releases



Alexander Sokurov
Faust

Sokurov's award-winning interpretation of Goethe's classic tale is a startling, hallucinatory exploration of moral anguish, shifting realities and the deep, dark recesses of the human soul.

● Available now On Demand and on DVD & Blu-ray 20 August.



Mia Hansen-Løve
Goodbye, First Love

A touching, tender and heartbreakingly powerful tale of the complexity and emotional intensity of teenage passion from Mia Hansen-Løve, director of Father of My Children.

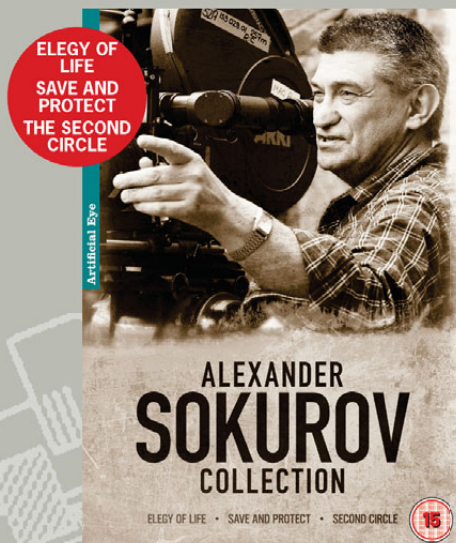
● Available now On Demand and on DVD & Blu-ray 10 September.



Béla Tarr
The Turin Horse

Raw, compelling and emotionally devastating, Béla Tarr's depiction of a descent into the void is groundbreaking cinema of the most artistically precise and philosophically rigorous order.

● Available now On Demand and on DVD & Blu-ray 10 September.



Alexander Sokurov
The Alexander Sokurov Collection

Previously unavailable on DVD, these three thrilling and audacious films from leading contemporary auteur Alexander Sokurov further cement his place as a visionary maestro of the highest order.

● Available on DVD & On Demand 24 September.



Sally Potter
Orlando

This mesmerising adaptation of Virginia Woolf's classic novel spans time, space, gender and reality. Witty, enchanting and visually stunning, it displays the immense talents of Tilda Swinton and Sally Potter at full tilt.

● Available on Blu-ray & On Demand 6 August. Out now on DVD.



Sally Potter
The Tango Lesson

Sally Potter chronicles her obsession with the tango in this sumptuous, dazzling, self-reflective spectacle of cinematic prowess and passionate physical movement, featuring Pablo Veron.

● Available on DVD, Blu-ray & On Demand 10 September.

Order now from amazon.co.uk

Free Super saver Delivery and Unlimited Free One-Day Delivery with Amazon Prime are available. Terms and Conditions apply. See www.amazon.co.uk for details

From Sight & Sound's Greatest Films of All Time Poll

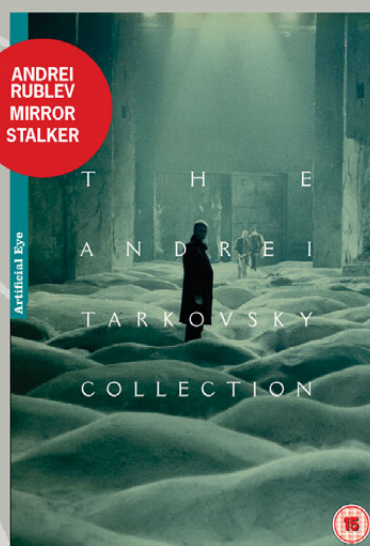


Jean Vigo

L'Atalante and the films of Jean Vigo

A timeless masterpiece of love and yearning, filmed in breathtakingly original yet utterly confident style, the only full length film made by Vigo before his tragic early demise.

- Available now on DVD & On Demand.

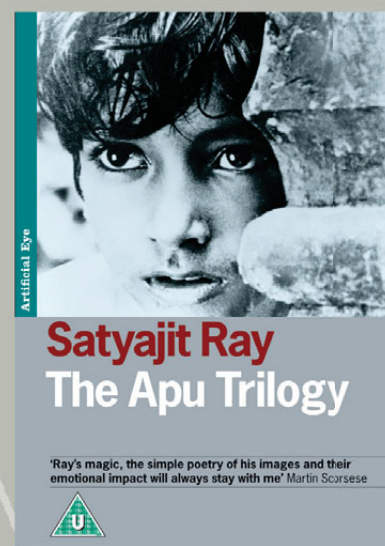


Andrei Tarkovsky

The Andrei Tarkovsky Collection

This definitive and comprehensive 7 disc collection of the Great Russian's complete oeuvre contains some of the most daring and memorable films ever made.

- Available now on DVD.

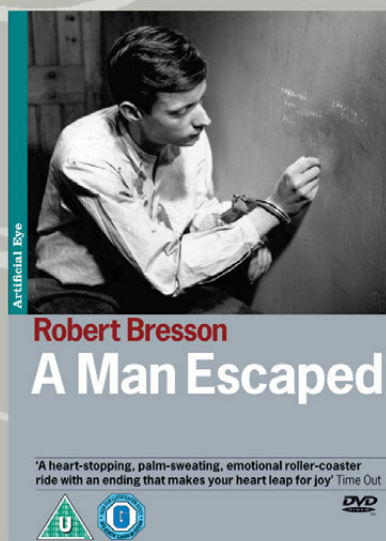


Satyajit Ray

Pather Panchali

Satyajit Ray's masterly debut feature, the first part of his stunning, humanistic Apu trilogy, is a timeless work of searing beauty, rigorous style and heartbreaking poignancy.

- Available now on DVD.

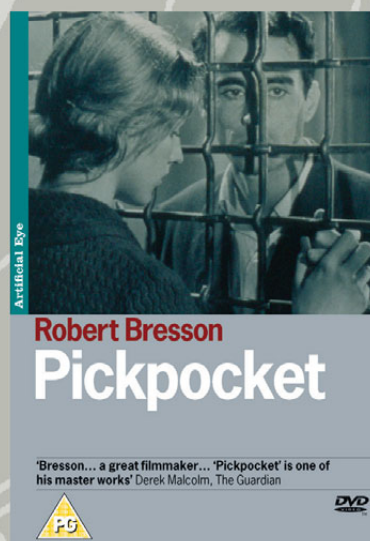


Robert Bresson

A Man Escaped

The magnum opus of Bresson's incredible, influential career, this true story of the imprisonment of a Resistance fighter during WWII encapsulates the brilliance of one of the world's greatest directors.

- Available now on DVD.

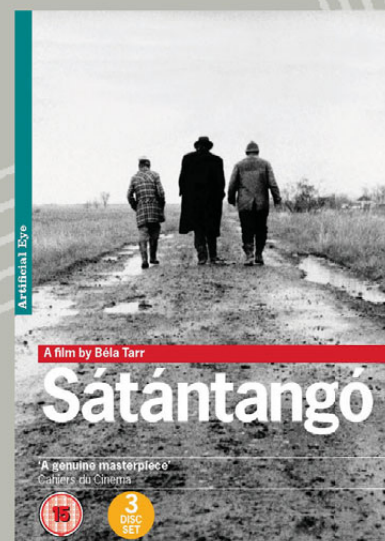


Robert Bresson

Pickpocket

Precise, deliberate, moving and authentic, Bresson's acclaimed examination of the nature of transgression and the quest for spiritual freedom is in its essence the very story of life itself.

- Available now on DVD.



Béla Tarr

Sátántangó

Defying classification and transcending any precedence, this immaculately composed, astoundingly shot and bleakly comic tour-de-force is an epic celluloid rendering quite unlike anything else.

- Available now on DVD.

Watch now on **Curzon on Demand**



Up-close

BBC GHOST STORIES



Misty morning: 'Lost Hearts'

Whistle and I'll Come to You (1968 & 2010 versions)

The Stalls of Barchester/A Warning to the Curious

Lost Hearts/The Treasure of Abbot

Thomas/The Ash Tree

The Signalman/Stigma/The Ice House

View from a Hill/Number 13

UK 1968-2010; BFI/Region 2 DVD; Certificate 12; Aspect Ratio 4:3; Selected features: Lawrence Gordon Clark introductions, Jonathan Miller and Sir Christopher Frayling discuss 'Whistle and I'll Come to You', Ramsey Campbell reads his M.R. James inspired story 'The Guide', 'Ghost Stories for Christmas with Christopher Lee'

Reviewed by Tony Earnshaw

The so-called golden ages of cinema and television rarely happen by design. What's more, their legacy and resonance can only be measured once they have passed. Time marches on but the effect and echoes of the golden age ensure that its personalities and product linger long in the memory.

For aficionados of haunted landscapes, ancient terrors, sensual sensations and psychological unease, the years 1971 to 1977 represent a halcyon period in which the quintessential English ghost story was given accessibility and broad appeal via a string of

BBC television adaptations under the title *A Ghost Story for Christmas*. The storyteller was M.R. James, the sympathetic adapter was Lawrence Gordon Clark. And the stories that came to define late-night Christmas fireside frights during that brief six-year span – so creepily effective, so timeless, so rooted in rarefied academia and so mightily malevolent in milieu and message – were *The Stalls of Barchester* (1971), *A Warning to the Curious* (1972), *Lost Hearts* (1973), *The Treasure of Abbot Thomas* (1974) and *The Ash Tree* (1975). All are now being released over five DVD volumes by the BFI, as are the last two films of the series, an adaptation of Charles Dickens's *The Signalman* (1976) and *Stigma* (1977), which had an original screenplay by Clive Exton. The collections also include Jonathan Miller's 1968 rationalist/revisionist adaptation of *Whistle and I'll Come to You*, packaged alongside the recent 2010 version, which starred John Hurt. The final volume collects two other more recent instalments, *View from a Hill* (2005) and *Number 13* (2006). A box-set collecting all of the releases is due out in October.

Clark jumped ship after *Stigma*, leaving the

BBC for greener pastures at Yorkshire Television. It may not have been immediately apparent at the time but, as the 1980s loomed, that fleeting golden age had come to an irrevocable end.

Like Karswell, the character he created in *Casting the Runes*, M.R. James was a magician whose wizardry conjured beings from alternate dimensions to his rational early-20th-century present. This wasn't traditional horror but a manifestation that pre-dated the Bible: old horror, and unfathomable.

The subtleties of James's storytelling have largely eluded filmmakers. In the 76 years since his death there has been only one bona fide movie from his 30-plus stories: Jacques Tourneur's *Night of the Demon* (1957), which was loosely adapted by Charles Bennett from *Casting the Runes*. Thus the small screen has been the conduit for the dark consciousness of James's work, via sympathetic collaborators such as Clark and Jonathan Miller.

A scholar and leading expert on medieval art, apocryphal literature and classical archaeology, James was a master of imbuing objects (usually from the distant past) with implacable malignancy, linking the present

with the ancient world via meddlesome men – and they were always men – who poked and pried into the grimmest corners of primitive history seeking forbidden knowledge. His objects are truly frightening because they resonate with our deepest and oldest fears – a whistle blown can summon an enemy from the darkness or raise a mighty wind; a buried crown is a sacred guardian against invasion and to remove it earns the ultimate punishment.

James sets his horrors on the periphery of his protagonists' sight and understanding; these are inexplicable, elemental things and, in a manner that destabilises both character and reader, are never explained. Thus dry, scholarly, closeted James, entrenched in the romanticism of Olde England, was the unlikely revolutionary who forever changed the face of modern horror with his penchant for fateful inevitability.

With *Whistle and I'll Come to You* Jonathan Miller had similarly redefined television terror (though his take on James deviated from the master's original construct) but he abdicated the throne. Enter Lawrence Gordon Clark. In 1969 Clark was a 31-year-old documentarist with the BBC's general features department. He was fascinated with the form, the history and the fiercely arcane (and unique) milieu of James's stories. Within the parameters of the heavily period-reliant genre he embraced, Clark would go on to become as important a figure as Val Lewton.

Driven by memories of his childhood, when his father would read James's tales, Clark pitched the idea of televising them to BBC1 controller Paul Fox by slipping a memo inside a copy of James's *Collected Ghost Stories* and suggesting an adaptation of *The Stalls of Barchester Cathedral*. In his abrupt fashion Fox responded with, "Why the hell should I give you something like this to do when you've never done drama before?" Clark replied, "It's a very good story. Why don't you just take a chance on me?" To his astonishment Fox agreed, commissioning what was to become the first in the series and providing a meagre budget (which Clark was to bust) of £9,000. The shooting schedule was 18 days. (Later productions under the drama department headed by producer Rosemary Hill were subsequently limited to only 12, and finally ten days.)

M.R. James's stories are written to be read in intimate spaces... The reader is required to invite the monster into the living room

Unencumbered by executive producers, developers or script editors, Clark set about recruiting the key crew who would assist in authoring the first story and later the second: lighting cameraman John McGlashan and sound recordist Dick Manton (the latter would go on to provide the eerie soundscape for five of the films). Clark himself assumed three duties: director, producer and writer, and was left by Paul Fox to sink or swim.

Clark took advantage of the BBC's technicians, set designers, costume designers and makeup artists, many of whom, like him, had been trained by the corporation and nurtured on staff contracts rather than hired short term and forever looking over their shoulders for the next job. The tightknit team he built and fostered remained with him for most of what would become a series and, says Clark, "Their contribution to its success was every bit as great as mine." (For while *A Ghost Story for Christmas* had initially been pitched as a one-off, it became an annual event; Clark has admitted that he wanted to secure the Christmas ghost story as a tradition.

Unfettered by any producer's influence, and mindful that the BBC never imposed a rigid time slot, Clark let his adaptations on the first stories run to their required length. And since the films were broadcast late at night at Christmas, when there was rarely anything scheduled afterwards, he could – and did – do precisely what he wanted, crafting stories that ran to anything between 32 and 50 minutes.

The latitude he was given by the BBC allowed Clark the autonomy to create his screenplays as he saw fit. Never slavish, he adopted as much of James's dialogue as was feasible but never allowed himself to be dictated to by the limitations of a script. During pre-production, he spent days scouting locations and adapting the scripts to what he found – he had an awareness of landscape and allowed the screenplay to evolve accordingly. For Clark, the script was an organic entity that emerged out

of the accidents of location filmmaking rather than a sacrosanct text. A flexible document, it was never finished until the film was made. Firmly of the opinion that film is a visual rather than a dialogue-driven medium, Clark let his camera tell the story. Dialogue, he felt, was merely a heightened form of sound effect.

The Stalls of Barchester was shot at Norwich Cathedral; *Lost Hearts*, with its Caligari-like predator Mr Abney, was filmed at Harrington Hall in the Lincolnshire Wolds; and *The Treasure of Abbot Thomas* was made in Wells Cathedral. For *A Warning to the Curious* (originally set in Aldeburgh in Suffolk and conceived by Clark almost as a silent film) he found the tidal expanses of Holkham in Norfolk more conducive to the threat from wide-open spaces that the story demands. And when he discovered the vestiges of a barrow in the pine-topped sand dunes that fringe the coastline there he knew he'd found the ideal place to shoot his film.

Just as James wrote 'entertainments' as opposed to art (though his festive frivolities have assumed a much darker hue), so Clark created accessible terrors for all strata of 1970s society. From the very beginning, Clark's films underlined his own artistic personality, and much of the success of the series can be traced back to his approach and his belief that James works better without padding. Tourneur's *Night of the Demon* just about survives the expansion required to transform *Casting the Runes* into a 90-minute feature; when Clark tackled the same story in 1979 he brought it in at 50 minutes, later observing that "you extend [James's stories] at your peril".

Successful M.R. James adapters recognise and accept that he is a 'small-room' writer: his stories are written to be read (or shown) in intimate spaces with a few pleasantly frightened people present. Tales like *Lost Hearts* aren't broad-spectrum affairs, but they provide a platform to understanding the secret of M.R. James: the reader is required to invite the monster into the living room.

"James is unforgiving. He's horrible," says Clark. "Anyone adapting him needs to empathise completely with him as an author – drawing the best from him whilst on some occasions changing him radically. I really do believe that."



Look of fear: 'A Warning to the Curious'



Grave tidings: 'Whistle and I'll Come to You' (1968)

New releases

AMICUS FILMS

They Came from Beyond Space

Freddie Francis; UK 1967; StudioCanal/Region 2 DVD;
Certificate PG; Aspect Ratio 1.66:1

The Land That Time Forgot

Kevin Connor; UK 1975; StudioCanal/Region 2 DVD;
Certificate PG; Aspect Ratio 1.85:1; Features: interviews
with Kevin Connor and Susan Penhaligon

At the Earth's Core

Kevin Connor; UK 1976; StudioCanal/Region 2 DVD;
Certificate PG; Aspect Ratio 1.78:1

Warlords of Atlantis

Kevin Connor; UK 1978; StudioCanal/Region 2 DVD;
Certificate PG; Aspect Ratio 1.78:1

Reviewed by Vic Pratt

Films: It's 50 years since Americans Max J. Rosenberg and Milton Subotsky founded Amicus, a British production company best beloved for modestly budgeted Hammer-influenced 'portmanteau' horror films. But the duo ventured into other genres too, from pre-Beatle pop extravaganza *It's Trad, Dad!* (Richard Lester, 1962) to the serious drama of Pinter's *The Birthday Party* (William Friedkin, 1968). And when returns on horror began to dwindle they shifted towards sci-fi and science fantasy, until Amicus eventually ended. Four such ventures into strange realms have just been released by StudioCanal.

They Came from Beyond Space, directed by Freddie Francis, has aliens possessing scientists in deepest Cornwall via strange glowing rocks, at which point the victims stare blankly ahead and say things like, "The brain of these primitives seems quite suitable for our purposes." Alas, it's not as much fun as it sounds, being rather flatly played by a slightly lacklustre cast. Despite enticing psychedelics and nifty set design, only when Michael Gough's invigoratingly hammy 'Master of the Moon' arrives in the final reel does warp drive engage.

More successful is lost-world fantasy *The Land That Time Forgot*, adapted from the Edgar Rice Burroughs novel. Beefy American Doug McClure – who made a career out of this kind of thing – is the tough guy who commandeers a WWI German submarine and then unites with his enemies to explore an uncharted island. Taking on the prehistoric beasts and hirsute primitives that linger there, McClure – who apparently didn't want the role – is ruggedly ideal, demonstrating distinct skill for appearing completely serious when faced with sometimes unconvincing prop dinosaurs. Indeed Subotsky, attending a screening with his four-year-old, confided to partner Rosenberg: "My son can tell that there are men inside the dinosaur suits." No matter. Director Kevin Connor excites with fast-paced action sequences voyeuristically shot through the rented foliage, while an intelligent screenplay (co-written by pulp master Michael Moorcock) adds wit, with such juicy lines as, "Should one drink white or red wine with plesiosaurus?" Splendid fun and a box-office hit.

McClure returned for another Burroughs adaptation, *At the Earth's Core* (again directed by Connor), burrowing deep into the Earth with Peter Cushing, who plays it strictly for laughs in a near-reprise of earlier turns as the



The burrowers: 'At the Earth's Core'

big-screen Dr Who (also for Amicus). They face strange bat-bird beasts which, like renegades from a Toho monster movie, are charming, unconvincing and explode with satisfying fireworks when they crash-land. There's little plot but lots of running around and fighting. It remains thoroughly entertaining if you don't stop to think about it at all.

Amicus had fizzled by the time of *Warlords of Atlantis*, again with McClure and again directed by Connor. Though a late addition to the strange-voyages canon it was one of the best. McClure's sailor descends via bathysphere into watery depths to battle aliens inhabiting lost Atlantis. They are presided over by a deadpan Michael Gothard, somehow retaining despotic dignity despite marching around sporting a girly blond-bob wig and what looks like a silver-lamé party dress. There are outstanding model creatures to be fought in this one, including a giant octopus and flying vampire fish. Provided that CGI hasn't forever ruined your – or your children's – appreciation of old-style effects, there's still great fun to be had here.

Discs: Sadly only *The Land That Time Forgot* has extras – interviews with Kevin Connor and Susan Penhaligon.

THE BIG TRAIL

Raoul Walsh; US 1930; 20th Century Fox/Region A Blu-ray and Region 1 DVD; 122 minutes; Aspect Ratio 2:10:1/1.33:1; Features: commentary, featurettes

Reviewed by Nick Pinkerton

Film: The essential adjective in describing *The Big Trail* is, simply, awesome. Raoul Walsh's cusp-of-the-Depression mega-production follows a fleet of Prairie Schooner wagons and the settlers who pilot them from their origin in Missouri to their Promised Land destination, a fair valley in the Pacific Northwest. The setting is the 1840s, and a very old man or woman in the audience of 1930 might still have recollected



Wagons roll: 'The Big Trail'

a similar crossing. A strikingly lithe 23-year-old John Wayne stars as the wagon train's scout, joined up because he suspects wagon boss Tyrone Power Sr may have bushwhacked his best friend – though Wayne also finds time to court Marguerite Churchill en route. Shooting in a very early widescreen process, 70mm 'Fox Grandeur', Walsh encompasses the plot in a teeming landscape of nearly constant activity and noise, which gives a sense of the wagon train as an actual, functioning organism.

A child of rowdy turn-of-the-century New York City, Walsh, from *Regeneration* (1915) through *Me and My Gal* (1932), *Sailor's Luck* and *The Bowery* (both 1933), showed the motley, pied texture of American rough-and-tumble democracy with more good humour and juggler's dexterity than any contemporary. He was famed as a director of outdoor action, a reputation that is more than justified here, as every step of the wagon train's journey, through all manner of inclement weathers, is reproduced in often gruelling detail: felling trees, fording rivers, hunting buffalo, negotiating cliff faces, repulsing Indian attacks. It's an incredible display of 'Rope, Muscle, and Determination', as one of the grandiloquent title cards has it, a feat that makes *Fitzcarraldo*'s ship-hoisting seem a mere parlour trick. Watching Walsh's extraordinary tactical accomplishment in *The Big Trail* one can only gape and wonder what he could've done to top this. Hannibal crossing the Alps?

Discs: Fox's two-disc package includes a Richard Schickel commentary track, a smattering of featurettes and the Academy frame (1.33:1) version of the film, shot simultaneously – standard practice as only a limited number of theatres were equipped for widescreen.

THE CHILDREN'S FILM FOUNDATION COLLECTION: VOLUME 1 – LONDON TALES

The Salvage Gang/Operation Third Form/Night Ferry

John Krish/David Eady/David Eady; UK 1958/66/76; BFI/Region 2; Certificate U; 50/56/58 minutes; Aspect Ratio 1.33:1; Features: short factual film 'Topic – Children's Theatre', illustrated essay booklet

Reviewed by Nick Pinkerton

Films: One of the most fascinating insights into the Children's Film Foundation's 30-year output offered by this disc isn't in the delightful and varied trio of features but in the 1959 *Topic* US news programme accompanying them: watching infrared footage of children acting along,



Barrow boys: 'The Salvage Gang'

SHE'S GOTTA HAVE IT

It set out to titillate ticket-buyers and put its star Suzanne Pleshette on the road to top billing, but this post-Sirkian soap is best viewed today as a camped-up curio

A RAGE TO LIVE

Walter Grauman; US 1965; MGM Limited Edition Collection/Region 0; Aspect Ratio 2.35:1

Reviewed by Tim Lucas

A Rage to Live is a novel first published in 1949 by Pennsylvania-born John O'Hara, best known for such memorably filmed works as *Pal Joey*, *BUTterfield 8* and *From the Terrace*. A bestseller in its day, this mildly racy 590-page tome was fulsomely described on its jacket as "a large-scale social chronicle of America set against the backdrop of Fort Penn, Pennsylvania... The Caldwelles are its leading family, and Grace Caldwell Tate is the dramatic symbol of their dominance. Her avidity for life carries her through an impetuous childhood, marriage, violent extramarital affairs, scandal, disaster, and her own kind of triumphs. Idealists and libertines, public-spirited and self-seeking citizens, officials and tradesmen and crusaders, men of violence and goodwill, and women of fierce possessiveness and tenderness form the pageant of memorable characters who vitalise what is perhaps the most ambitious work of O'Hara's career."

Though it has its own modest points of value, this film adaptation is a more downscaled affair, belonging to a strain of post-Sirkian, early 1960s melodrama in which various characters pay a very public price for succumbing to one woman's "avidity for life" (eg nymphomania), popular in the days before the Pill and American cinema's pending freedoms. What served at the time as a kind of popcorn-and-birch-rod penitence ritual – whereby predominantly female audiences could vicariously thrill to the heroine's sexual adventuring and use the example of her moralistic punishment to beat the devil down within themselves, and offering just enough of a whiff of potential sex to entice some male ticket-buyers – now seems mostly approachable as overwrought, camped-up entertainment.

Updated from the late 1940s but only slightly thanks to its behind-the-times *Peyton Place*-type setting, *A Rage to Live* was director Walter Grauman's follow-up to a more brutal women's picture, the shocking Olivia De Havilland thriller *Lady in a Cage* (1964). It was a stab at top billing for actress Suzanne Pleshette, who had scored a Golden Globe nomination for her supporting role in *The Birds* (1963) and was clearly considered a likely contender to repeat fellow brunette Elizabeth Taylor's good fortune in snagging a best actress Oscar for *BUTterfield 8*.

Cast as Grace Caldwell Tate, a small-town sex addict whose unbridled carnal appetites



Appetite for scandal: Suzanne Pleshette in 'A Rage to Live'

bring many a man low, though none lower than herself, Pleshette is undone by an opening hurdle placed too high: she is obliged to introduce her character for an extended onscreen period as a high-school student, though she was almost 30 at the time and known for the Winstons-and-bourbon tenor of her voice. Future *Lost in Space* star Mark Goddard rapes her and she discovers she likes it; and when she's placed in charge of caring for her ailing mother (Carmen Mathews), her need for a man, any man, sees to it that she's absent from the room when mom suffers a fatal heart attack, leading to a burden of guilt that evaporates within ten minutes or less. She soon finds the love of a decent man, Sidney Tate (Bradford Dillman, dyed blond to avoid confusion with the many other dark-haired men in the cast), who proposes marriage and agrees to work the farmland that she's inherited. Maintaining the property brings back into Grace's life one Roger Bannon (Ben Gazzara), a hairy-chested handyman who corners her during a rainstorm to confess all the years of lust he's felt for her since he was her family's grocery delivery boy... and that's all it takes for him to become the Oliver Mellors to her Constance Chatterley. Everyone basically gets what they want, and a lot of it, until Grace's reputation makes it

Grace is a small-town sex addict whose carnal appetites bring many a man low, though none lower than herself

too hard for the town's snoops to believe she would ever resist handsome newspaper editor Jack Hollister (Peter Graves), the only suitor to whom she ever said a fond but regretful no. The misguided and increasingly hysterical jealousy of Hollister's wife Amy (Bethel Leslie) steers the whole mess to a point of no return and a damning crane shot at the fade-out.

The film was handsomely shot in sleek black-and-white Panavision by Charles Lawton on the familiar streets, sets and locations of the Universal backlot, giving this anamorphic disc-on-demand pressing the choice patina of the raciest Universal-International pictures. Lawton's interesting career encompassed Tod Browning's *Miracles for Sale* (1939), Orson Welles's *The Lady from Shanghai* (1947), Budd Boetticher's *The Tall T* (1957) and, intriguingly, virtually all of Pleshette's feature work up to this time. His classy handling of this tawdry trash is given a further lift by the breezy scoring of Nelson Riddle, which evokes the freewheeling feel of the TV series *Route 66*, of which he, director Grauman and Ms Pleshette were all veterans. (Pleshette remained active in television even at the peak of her popularity, as did Grauman.)

On its release, *A Rage to Live* ballyhooed a groundbreaking nude-under-the-covers bedroom scene involving Pleshette and Gazzara, but it barely exists in the final cut, just a brief glimpse of a bare-shouldered clinch. Likewise the language is never bolder than "slut" (which Grace is called a lot), which means that it aged by a sudden decade on the release of *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* the following year.

New releases

➔ roaring at or hiding from films at a Saturday-morning matinee reminds one that this was a participatory medium, a celluloid pantomime. With that in mind, these three congenial, durable, metropolitan features feel pleasingly full of chewy themes beyond their child-proofed adventure formats and nostalgic appeal. In addition to their wholesome ethos, they illustrate how adaptable the CFF's compactly sturdy narratives could be, and how responsive to social change.

John Krish's *The Salvage Gang*, shot with his customary monochrome elegance and visual reflectiveness, winds dreamily across late-50s London as a reassuringly scruffy (even mildly multicultural) quartet chase odd jobs and a mislaid bedstead from Islington to Tower Bridge and back. Krish coaxes engaging – if not naturalistic – performances from his young cast (CFF chief Mary Field preferred stage-school children with RP accents, for their supposed vocal clarity). But his gorgeous shots of a still-recovering London (St Paul's with a bomb-splintered pub in the foreground, a giddy shot of a crane snatching the bed on to a busy building site) give a sharp sense of time and place to Mary Cathcart Borer's gentle tale.

David Eady's *Operation Third Form* is far pacier, showing the CFF keeping current with children's changing tastes in cinema. Its swinging soundtrack and fast-moving story are identifiably those of a 1960s thriller (right down to its hidden tape-recorder and Polaroid camera), albeit one in which schoolboys (led by a chirpy John Moulder-Brown, later the star of *Deep End*) deftly foil an art thief's plans. Eady's 1976 Egyptian-mummy-smuggling drama *By Night Ferry* is long on jeopardy (the young heroes are variously menaced by runaway railway wagons, anaesthetised by Bernard Cribbins, and nailed into crates) and social realism (litter-strewn streets, mentions of juvenile delinquency), and its depictions of both London and youth culture are positively pungent. Nonetheless, what unites all three of these films is a city – now seemingly long gone – where children inhabit and roam public spaces with an insouciant, everyday freedom.

Discs: *The Salvage Gang* and *Operation Third Form* offer deliciously crisp transfers, and *Night Ferry*'s images have the authentically muted 70s colours of an episode of *The Sweeney*. While the booklet essays are good (if on the short side compared with the COI or National Coal Board offerings), seeing Mary Field stun her *Topic* interviewers with a brisk defence of violence on film ("Because all children are violent") is worth the price of the disc.

JEAN GRÉMILLON DURING THE OCCUPATION

Remorques/Lumière d'été/Le ciel est à vous

Jean Grémillon; France 1941/43/44; Criterion/Region 1
NTSC DVD; 84/110/107 minutes; Aspect Ratio 1.33:1;

Features: essays

Reviewed by Michael Atkinson

Films: Jean Grémillon is one of cinema's great journeymen, migrating from playing violin in a silent-movie house to making documentary shorts and eventually graduating



Shooting season: 'Lumière d'été'

to features, any features, by the time he was 26. He was a major player in the 'poetic realism' trend of the 1930s (with the likes of 1937's *Gueule d'amour*, with Jean Gabin), but here we showcase the three films he made during the Nazi occupation, when French films were micro-analysed for anti-German subversionism and filmmakers who didn't work for the Nazi-run Continental Films ran the risk of getting deported to the camps.

Grémillon skirted the crisis like many did, and the films defy their oppressive context by being intensely, feverishly French. *Remorques* (*Stormy Waters*) is particularly dark and swoony, having been begun on the cusp of the war and then finished, with the Germans' acquiescence, two years later in 1941. Co-written with André Cayette and Jacques Prévert, it's a fatalistic romance about rescue-salvage sailors, opening at a wedding that's unsurprisingly interrupted by a sudden storm and a stranded vessel out at sea, compelling the men to scramble into the darkness and do what they do routinely

– risk their lives. Gabin is, naturally, the captain, and this latest near-scuttle almost costs him his ship, but it also places his tense marriage to Madeleine Renaud in jeopardy after the evil ship-scuttler's disenchanted wife (Michèle Morgan) appears and initiates a fated romance with the impregnable man of integrity. Gabin, with his so-relaxed-he's-at-home-in-bed manner, his boxer's nose and weary duffel-hammocked eyes, makes the film compulsively watchable as always, even if the story feels driven by unspoken whim.

In fact, all three films' stories are subject to the French lack of impulse control, and this is perhaps why they baffled the German censors, who may well have thought right-minded audiences would find all this frivolous behaviour distasteful. *Lumière d'été* is a curious contraption, occupying a remote mountain hotel above the construction of a dam and charting the pentalogical romantic tangle, in this empty, aimless Shangri-La, between Renaud's ageing hotelier, Paul Bernard's soul-wasted zillionaire, Pierre Brasseur's alcoholic painter, Georges Marchal's young explosives expert and, at the centre, Madeleine Robinson's rather pallid nowhere girl. (Also a resident: *Les Vampires*' Mazamette, Marcel Lévesque!) As it happens, the censors pulled it, over vague discomfiture with its 'decadence' – which is hardly celebrated in the film itself.

Le ciel est à vous was, however, beloved by both Vichy and audiences alike, although it can now be read as the more subversive film, being a fictionalised portrait of working-class aviatrix Andrée Dupeyron. Renaud and Charles Vanel play, rather magisterially, a married couple struggling with dreams of auto-shop success and of breaking aviation records, and



Jaws The sense of primal terror drives everything from the slow, inexorable undertow at the start to the full-on assaults on the Orca and its fractious crew

Grémillon sure-handedly focuses on family life, marital stress and bliss and middle-aged contemplations of time and mortality.

In all three of these films Grémillon's eye for detail, nuance, unpredictable humanity and anti-clichés acts as its own kind of cultural resistance.

Discs: All recently restored, each with a brief contextual essay by Michael Koresky.

JAWS

Steven Spielberg; US 1975; Universal/Region B Blu-ray; Certificate 12; 125 minutes; Aspect Ratio 2.35:1; Features: 'The Making of Jaws' and 'The Shark Is Still Working' documentaries, restoration demo, deleted scenes, outtakes, stills galleries, trailer

Reviewed by Michael Brooke

Film: It's likely we'd remember *Jaws* even if it had been the disaster that everyone feared during production. By the end, its budget and schedule had nearly tripled amid countless horror stories about defective sharks, uncooperative weather, on-set grudge matches and a script being rewritten almost daily to try to keep things metaphorically as well as literally afloat. Parallels would have been drawn between the hubristic ambition of 27-year-old Steven Spielberg and that of the driven but doomed Captain Ahab – he might have worked again (he had, after all, made a promising theatrical debut with *The Sugarland Express* and a handful of nifty TV movies) but undoubtedly with his creative wings clipped as severely as Michael Cimino's and Hugh Hudson's were the following decade.

That the final result works so brilliantly even on the umpteenth viewing is certainly thanks to the talent involved but also due to the most fortuitous serendipity: the mechanical shark was such an embarrassment at first that Spielberg was forced, in his words, "to become more like Alfred Hitchcock than Ray Harryhausen", which had the happy side-effect of magnifying the sense of primal terror which drives everything from the slow, inexorable undertow at the start to the repeated full-on assaults on the Orca and its fractious three-man crew. The Hitchcock parallels also stand up in John Williams's score: not since Bernard Herrmann transformed *Psycho* had a single film been so indelibly marked by such a simple but naggingly memorable musical motif.

Disc: As one of the extras confirms in detail, this new Blu-ray benefits from extensive restoration, and the high-definition image looks lab-fresh, with a fine but undistracting patina of grain to appease celluloid purists. They'll also appreciate the retention of the original mono soundtrack, though the surround-sound remix is surprisingly effective. Quality-over-quantity extras are headed by Laurent Bouzereau's already much circulated two-hour official 'making-of', complemented beautifully by the fan-made *The Shark Is Still Working*, which is almost as long and has many of the same interviewees, but which eschews redundant content overlaps in favour of hitherto neglected areas such as the process of designing the original iconic book cover, Spielberg's instant reaction to his lack of a personal Oscar



Rear view: Pier Paolo Pasolini's 'Pigsty'

nomination ("I got beaten out by Fellini!") or the revelation that actress Lee Fierro (who played the mother of one of the shark's first victims) is asked to slap *Jaws* fans to this day.

THE MOST DANGEROUS GAME/ GOW THE HEADHUNTER (CANNIBAL ISLAND)

Irving Pichel and Ernest B. Schoedsack/Edward A. Salisbury; US 1932/28; Flicker Alley/Region ABC Blu-ray; 60/63 minutes; Aspect Ratio 1.37:1/1.33:1; Features: essays, audio essays, Merian C. Cooper documentary, Cooper slideshow by Kevin Brownlow

Reviewed by Michael Atkinson

Films: Two early-talkie exotics that play like foreshocks leading up to the quake of *King Kong* in 1933, this pair of explorers' daydreams makes for fascinating historical viewing. *Gow* began as a years-long yacht odyssey during the 1920s led by wealthy adventurer Edward A. Salisbury (and photographed by, among others, Merian C. Cooper and Ernest B. Schoedsack) through the South Sea islands. The resulting footage was initially converted into a series of short films used as lecture illustrations; it was first consolidated into a feature in 1928, and thanks to its casual island nudity and ostensibly hair-raising subject-matter, *Gow* became one of those exploitation titles that was perennially rereleased and barnstormed for decades afterwards. The version here (titled *Cannibal Island* in the 1950s) is narrated by expedition member William Peck in hilariously stentorian tones, characterising the Pacific natives on view as clever and fit children at best, smelly demonic savages at worst. Someone could write a book about the late-colonial sociopolitics inherent in the film (and the entire western pop-cultural obsession with innocent Pacific primitivity that raged through the 1920s and 30s in documentaries and fiction films equally), but the value of *Gow* as a simple anthropological document – supposedly, Salisbury's original intent – is incalculable now that those island lifestyles are all but vanished.

The Most Dangerous Game is indeed a brother film to *Kong* – Cooper and Schoedsack shot it on the same sets, with much of the same cast and crew, at the same time (stars Joel McCrea and Fay Wray even run across the

famous chasm-bridging log), leaving the impression of a secondary narrative taking place somewhere else on Skull Island while the giant ape woos his blonde human. The first and standard adaptation of Richard Connell's classic short story, the movie thrums modestly on Wray's dewiness and the eye-bulging Leslie Banks as the erratically accented Russian count now obsessed with hunting humans. Relative to other early talkies it's action-packed and bloodthirsty, initiating a bloodsport subgenre that still thrives in *The Hunger Games* franchise and other dystopias. **Disc:** Lovely restorations from weathered masters and scholarly supplements.

FILMS BY PIER PAOLO PASOLINI

Let's Wash Our Brains: RoGoPaG

Italy/France 1963; Masters of Cinema/Region B Blu-ray and Region 2 DVD Dual Format; Certificate PG; 122 minutes; Aspect Ratio 1.85:1; Features: trailer, booklet with essays by Pasquale Iannone, Tag Gallagher, Arthur Mas and Martial Pisani, archive material

Hawks and Sparrows

Italy 1966; Masters of Cinema/Region 2 DVD; Certificate PG; 85 minutes; Aspect Ratio 1.85:1 anamorphic; Features: trailer, essay

Pigsty

Italy/France 1969; Masters of Cinema/Region 2 DVD; Certificate 15; 94 minutes; Aspect Ratio 1.85:1 anamorphic; Features: trailer, essay

Reviewed by Michael Brooke

Films: The latest trio of separate releases from Masters of Cinema's ongoing Pasolini survey sees him at his most overtly Buñuelian. The portmanteau effort usually known as *RoGoPaG* (though the full title is as shown above) compiles shorts by Roberto Rossellini (*Virginity*), Jean-Luc Godard (*The New World*), Pasolini (*La ricotta*) and Ugo Gregoretti (*Free Range Chicken*). The Rossellini is a trite morality play about an Alitalia air hostess turning the tables on an overly pushy admirer. The Godard is a typically gnomish study of an incommunicative relationship, hampered here by the after-effects of an atomic explosion that has seemingly caused no physical damage but has led to a profound psychological shift which its protagonist struggles to process coherently. The others are more



New releases

directly satirical, with the Gregoretti seemingly anticipating 1970s British sitcom *The Good Life* in its portrait of a family attempting to escape the consumerist rat race by living off the land, but drawing far more pessimistic conclusions. Meanwhile *La ricotta*, the quartet's best-known film (thanks not least to its successful prosecution for blasphemy in Italy) contrasts the staging of a Biblical epic with the ironic mistreatment of its hapless performers. Orson Welles is the director, reading Pasolini's novel *Mamma Roma* between takes and becoming mesmerised by the line "I am a force from the past."

Pasolini's fourth feature *Hawks and Sparrows* sets its waywardly whimsical tone from the start with its sung opening credits (set to a splendidly jangly Ennio Morricone score) and continues with regular speeded-up slapstick interludes and a Marxist talking crow as one of the principal characters. As the bird announces the end of the era of Brecht and Rossellini, Pasolini attempts an alternative mode of representation through the personae of veteran Neapolitan comic Totò and Pasolini's teenage muse Ninetto Davoli – they're seen as Beckettian tramps negotiating a landscape in transition from the medieval to the modern (whose half-built motorways are as functionally useless as half-destroyed churches) or medieval monks who emulate St Francis's conversations with the hawks and the sparrows (their chirping is helpfully subtitled). Although some of its more recondite allusions need footnotes (an intertitle stresses that the crow's leftwing views were formed in the era preceding Italian Communist leader Palmiro Togliatti's death), it remains Pasolini's most disarmingly charming film, encapsulated by the way that Totò's eyebrows sway gently in time to a rumbustious rock 'n' roll track.

Davoli also pops up in the far darker *Pigsty*, as the only common performer in two otherwise unconnected narrative strands in which ancient taboos are offset by more recent ones. In the first of these, set on the smoking slopes of Mount Etna, an unnamed nomad (Pierre Clémenti, Italian cinema's Russell Brand) turns to cannibalism, something that he claims makes him "tremble with joy". In the second story, Julian (Jean-Pierre Léaud) prefers bestiality, possibly to escape the implications of being the heir of a successful West German industrialist (Alberto Lionello) whose past would be clear even without the toothbrush moustache or fondness for playing the 'Horst-Wessel Lied' on the harp. Though the humour could hardly be darker, it's funnier than *Salò* but unmistakably points Pasolini's cinema in that despairing direction.

Discs: *RoGoPaG* gets the dual-format treatment, the others are on DVD only, but all transfers are up to this label's usual excellent standards, with the fine-grain colour tableaux from *La ricotta* coming across particularly well. The only on-disc extras are trailers, but each release gets a comprehensive booklet with a new essay by Pasquale Iannone (*RoGoPag* has additional contributions from Tag Gallagher, Arthur Mas and Martial Pisani) and archive materials.



Demob mobster: 'They Made Me a Fugitive'

THEY MADE ME A FUGITIVE

Alberto Cavalcanti; UK 1947; Kino Lorber/Region-free Blu-ray; 100 minutes; Aspect Ratio 1.33:1

Reviewed by Nick Pinkerton

Film: With the 2010 restoration and rerelease of Alberto Cavalcanti's bracingly savage homefront white-knuckler *Went the Day Well?* (1942), a renewal of interest in this prodigiously talented globe-trotting Brazilian who alighted in England at the peak of his powers seems inevitable, and spiv thriller *They Made Me a Fugitive*, likewise resuscitated for Blu-ray, more than justifies the attention.

"People have got terrible dishonest since the war," a lorry driver says at one point to hitchhiker Clem Morgan (Trevor Howard), who should know – he's freshly busted out of HM's Prison. An unusually morally compromised protagonist for the time, Clem's a demobbed RAF man who has turned to black marketing to get his adrenaline kick, but he'll draw the line somewhere – at narcotics, in fact – and that's what landed him in the clink. He's a relatively straight man in a very crooked England.

Now on his way to London to settle scores with gangster Narcy (Griffith Jones), a dandyish woman-beater who framed him for a cop-killing, Clem returns to slink through a nocturnal Soho of rented rooms and music-halls. Even in posher precincts, however, we get a glimpse of a national bloodthirst: when Clem busts into

a country estate for a change of clothes, the somnambulist lady of the house tries to recruit him to kill off her drunkard husband.

Noel Langley's screenplay, based on a novel by Jackson Budd, assumes a studied world-weariness, a fed-up-with-causes fatigue and post-war cynicism. The gallows drollery that is the film's lingua franca is the cool cover for the constant potential for hot violence, which Cavalcanti renders with a between-the-eyes realism, whether lingering on the queasy aftermath of an expressionistically filmed beating or conducting the raving last-reel donnybrook, before a downbeat ending not bettered until *The Third Man* (1949).

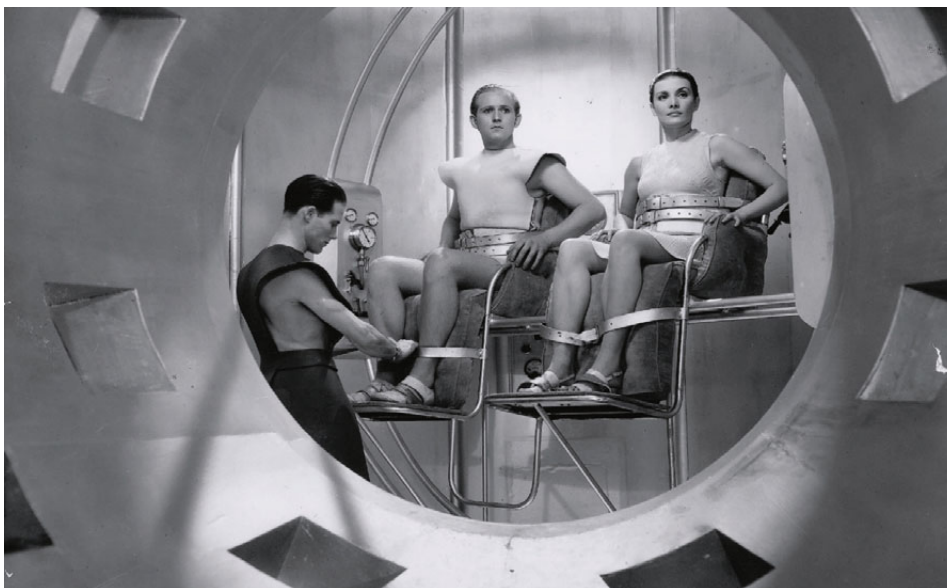
Disc: The materials bear some war wounds but overall it's a beauty on Blu-ray for the first time, with the fruits of Czech cinematographer Otto Heller's lightbox cleaned of all but moral tarnish. Skeletal extras.

THINGS TO COME

William Cameron Menzies; UK 1936; Network/Region B Blu-ray; Certificate PG; 96 minutes; Aspect Ratio 1.33:1; Features: virtual extended edition, commentary, 'Brian Aldiss on H.G. Wells'; Ralph Richardson interview, 78rpm recording ('The Wandering Sickness'), stills galleries, trailer, booklet

Reviewed by Michael Brooke

Film: It's fascinating rediscovering Britain's first large-scale sci-fi feature in the wake of the recent revival of interest in the work of the GPO Film Unit, since *Things to Come* simultaneously echoes those films' (and their decade's) abiding obsession with modernist images and ideas while presciently anticipating the turn they and the country would take in late 1939, when war was declared a year earlier than presiding genius H.G. Wells foretold in his screenplay. Wells went on to envisage decades of conflict and a regression to a quasi-medieval existence by 1970 before the resumption of progress under a benign but increasingly stifling utopian world government, whose architectural visions are realised here by William Cameron Menzies and designer Vincent Korda through sets that remain as visually and conceptually



Future history: 'Things to Come'

impressive as those of *Metropolis* and *Blade Runner*. On the downside, despite this version being sourced from the longest surviving print, the film remains severely truncated from the original (though this is extensively addressed by the extras), and despite memorable turns by Raymond Massey (as the visionary Cabal and his great-grandson) and Ralph Richardson (as the thuggish Mussolini-inspired 'Boss'), too many characters make too little impression. Wells seemed more interested in their dialectical function than in their human qualities, and he certainly had a point when he harrumphed that the finished film was "pretentious, clumsy and scamped". But one of the great demerits of British cinema is that it too often fights shy of pretension, and this ungainly, sometimes maddening but more often weirdly compelling and genuinely visionary folly suggests what we've missed.

Disc: This upgrade of Network's already excellent 2007 double-DVD edition replaces the first disc with a Blu-ray and considerably expands the booklet. The Blu-ray transfer is as good as the 76-year-old materials permit (certainly on a par with the BFI's Humphrey Jennings efforts) and the extensive stills galleries have also been upgraded to high definition. The extras are impressively scholarly, with *Things to Come* expert Nick Cooper contributing an absorbing commentary, a 30-page essay and advice on the second disc's 'virtual extended edition' of the entire film, which reinstates missing and never-shot scenes via stills and script extracts, in the process supporting Wells's complaint that the more philosophical final third saw the heaviest cuts. Brian Aldiss's 1971 documentary about Wells provides useful background, but the often uproarious Russell Harty encounter with a pipe-smoking Ralph Richardson doesn't mention the film once.

THROUGH THE WEEPING GLASS: ON THE CONSOLATIONS OF LIFE EVERLASTING (LIMBOS & AFTERBREEZES IN THE MÜTTER MUSEUM)

Stephen and Timothy Quay; US/UK 2011; Mütter Museum/Region 1 NTSC DVD; 31 minutes; Aspect Ratio 16:9; Features: making-of documentary, downloadable soundtrack mp3

Reviewed by Michael Atkinson

Film: Little wonder that the Quay Brothers, after being invited to stage a gallery show of their sets and miniatures at Philadelphia's Mütter Museum in 2009, would find this formidable 'cabinet museum' of medical history – anomalies, remnants, texts, bones, preserved tissue – an irresistible subject.

This featurette proceeds in classically elliptical Quay mode through the museum's morbid collections, from the Hyrtl Skull Collection (each 19th-century head-bone comes with its own tragic story) and a catalogued stockpile of things impossibly swallowed (and surgically removed) to 14th-century medical texts, severed bound Chinese feet, jars of deformed fetuses and a plaster death cast of conjoined twins Chang and Eng complete with plaster-logged hair. Despite feints



Wonderful London

The films bring a vanished era to life and allow us to picture how cityscapes have changed, what people wore, how the buses looked

towards education, the Mütter is apparently quite comfortable defining itself as a kind of stunning sideshow experience in an 1800s context, with enough real-life body horror to overpower a dozen young Cronenbergs, and the Quays employ the place as though it were one giant Quay set, shot through layers of glass and shrouded in shadow. (There are only sporadic moments of subtle animation.)

Somewhat overdefined by Derek Jacobi's plummy narration and Timothy Nelson's melodramatic score, the film isn't a major Quay knockout but a tchotchke for their memory shelf, another paean for the unknowable mysteries of a handcrafted and richly textured past, which in the Quays' view (and otherwise) seems so much more resonant and beautiful than the present in which we are trapped.

Disc: A fine transfer, and the accompanying documentary offers as much film of the Quays in person and at work as we've yet had.

Wonderful London

Barging Through London/Cosmopolitan London/London's Sunday/Flowers of London/London's Free Shows/London off the Track

UK 1924; BFI/Region 0 DVD; Certificate E; 57 minutes; Aspect Ratio 1.33:1; Features: 'Dickens' London', 'London's Outer Ring', 'London Old and New', 'London's Contrasts', 'Known London', 'Along Father Thames to Shepperton'; booklet with essays by Bryony Dixon, Iain Sinclair, Jude Rogers and Sukhdev Sandhu

Reviewed by Geoffrey Macnab

Films: The 'Wonderful London' films were made in the mid-1920s, curator Bryony Dixon explains in the booklet included here, to exploit "the popularity of Arthur St John Adcock's fortnightly magazine *Wonderful London*". They are fascinating in the same way that the Mitchell and Kenyon films are (made 20 years

earlier), bringing a vanished era to life and allowing us to picture how cityscapes have changed in the intervening years, what people wore, how the buses looked. However, these films also have a different dimension – they are edited and shot like mini-travelogues, and their playful, facetious and occasionally (at least to modern viewers) offensive intertitles add a layer of complexity to the imagery.

Many of the films are themselves steeped in nostalgia, looking back into London's past from their 1920s vantage point. In the short 'Dickens' London', we see various Dickens characters confronting modernity: Pickwick is pictured clambering aboard an omnibus and Little Nell is allowed to go half price. *London's Sunday* is evocative of the great German film *People on Sunday*, but sadly lacks the eroticism and subversive edge that Siodmak, Zinnemann and co brought to their depiction of a Sunday in Berlin. *Cosmopolitan London* is, at least in its imagery, a celebration of difference and diversity – for a two-penny ride you can be among "strange faces and scenes reminiscent of foreign climes". The camera picks out Italian butchers, newsstands with papers from all over the world, French bakeries and bars, but the intertitles make it very clear that we're looking in at "the Jewish humanity off the Whitechapel Road" or the "Asiatics" in Limehouse from a white, middle-class, English point of view. The films evince a fear of difference at the same time as they celebrate the great city's diversity, and the references to "our colonial brethren" can't help but grate.

Discs: The films have been transferred in high definition and include six new restorations by the BFI National Archive, with new piano music by John Sweeney.

Television

DIXON OF DOCK GREEN

BBC; UK 1970-74; Acorn Media/Region 2; Certificate PG; 285 minutes; Aspect Ratio 4:3; Features: picture gallery, text biographies

Reviewed by Sergio Angelini

Programme: Why didn't PC George Dixon stay dead? Could it be that post-war Britain still needed the reassurance that men of good character, even after being killed in the line of duty, would always be there to look over them? Jack Warner's character was first introduced in *The Blue Lamp* (1950), Ealing Studios' paean to the bobby on the beat, and then quickly killed off, prefiguring shock exits from the likes of *Madigan* and *LA Confidential*. As with those movies the character got a sort of televisual reprieve, but here the results led to unprecedented success, writer Ted Willis's resurrection for the BBC ultimately spanning an unbroken 21-year primetime run. For all that, history hasn't been kind, and only a handful of the 432 episodes survive intact.

This set is culled from the show's later years in colour, with Warner now a somewhat doddering desk sergeant – not surprising given that he was already in his mid-seventies in the first of the stories collected here – leaving the legwork to his son-in-law, played by Peter Byrne (who had also been with the series since its inception). The stories all project a romanticised and cosy view of the police force that was probably already starting to fade when the show began, let alone in the era of the Kent State shootings in the US and, in this country, the lead-up to the 'Operation Countryman' investigations into Metropolitan Police corruption.

Amazingly, Willis single-handedly scripted the entire first nine seasons of the show. After his departure in 1963 the first story was written by Eric Paice, who would remain on the writing staff for the next decade. In this collection he contributes the three best scripts, all of them dealing with people who go missing and may not want to be found. The bleakest, strangest and most powerful of these is 'Waste Land', an almost impressionist exploration of a character who is lost in every sense and who ultimately never even appears on screen. Like most of the stories available for this anthology, it is somewhat unrepresentative of the series as a whole, since it was shot on film and outside the studio, though this probably explains why it survives at all. Let's hope more will become available soon.

Discs: The episodes made on video fare better than the slightly battered ones shot on 16mm, but all are perfectly watchable.

LOST EMPIRES

Granada/ITV; UK 1986; Acorn Media/Region 2 DVD; Certificate 15; 411 minutes; Aspect Ratio 4:3; Features: picture gallery, text biographies

Reviewed by Sergio Angelini

Programme: J.B. Priestley burst on to the literary scene in 1929 with *The Good Companions*, his story of theatre folk, and his career as a novelist came almost full circle four decades on with *Lost Empires*, a *Bildungsroman* set during the sunset of music hall and on the



Lost Empires

A picaresque story that barely stops even for murder, suicide, drug-fuelled orgies or the liberation of a prominent suffragette

eve of the First World War. This mammoth and highly impressive adaptation by Ian Curteis features Colin Firth as Richard Herncastle, a recently orphaned northern lad who is taken away from a career in accountancy by his Uncle Nick, a stage magician of steely determination and ice-cold misanthropy, brought perfectly to sinister life by John Castle. Laurence Olivier also stands out in a powerful and unglamorous star turn as a pitiful comedian on his last legs, while the extended depictions of the various variety acts are wonderfully evocative, punctuating a picaresque story that barely stops even for murder, suicide, drug-fuelled orgies or the liberation of a prominent suffragette.

The various romantic entanglements that keep Richard from his true love Nancy – mainly in the shapely form of Pamela Stephenson and Carmen du Sautoy – are a bit hackneyed, and the syrupy score by Derek Hilton doesn't help much. The lovers' reunion at the conclusion, however, is hard won and rewarding, though not as much as a long-mooted, endlessly delayed and much anticipated 'two-dwarf' effect, which pays off quite splendidly in the finale.

Disc: The polished sheen of Mike Popley's gauzy 16mm photography has been expertly rendered to DVD.

UNDERMIND

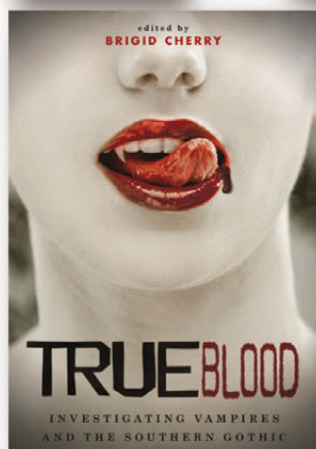
ABC/ITV; UK 1965; Network DVD/Region 2 DVD; 528 minutes; Certificate PG; Aspect Ratio 4:3

Reviewed by Sergio Angelini

Programme: R.D. Laing meets Fred Hoyle for a quirky serial that, as the punning title suggests, is somewhat self-consciously clever, with creator Robert Banks Stewart even credited on screen with having "evolved" it. A paranoid conspiracy thriller that looks forward to *The Invaders* and even *The X Files*, it stars Jeremy Wilkin as Drew, an HR consultant who returns from a trip abroad to find Britain crumbling from within. His brother Frank (Jeremy Kemp) has split from his wife Anne (Rosemary Nichols), having become cold, unfeeling and ultimately murderous, a condition ascribed to an unusual capacity to perceive high-frequency sounds. Subliminal messages are apparently being beamed from a foreign power to sabotage society, brainwashing receptive citizens and turning them into unwitting puppets. Each week Drew and Anne investigate cases that might bring the country into disrepute, she usually going undercover (barroom chanteuse one week, stripper the next), while he invariably finds a sympathetic ally who ultimately turns out to be one of 'them'.

Disc: The black-and-white telerecordings are in surprisingly good shape.

Read

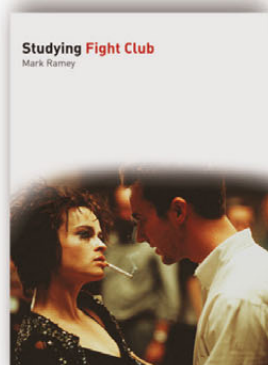


TRUE BLOOD

Investigating Vampires and Southern Gothic

Edited by Brigid Cherry, I.B. Tauris, 232pp, paperback, £12.99, ISBN 9781848859401. As seen in HBO's *True Blood*, vampires have never been more edgy, gory or sexy. Since its arrival on screen in 2008, Alan Ball's adaptation of *The Southern Vampire Mysteries* by Charlaine Harris has exploited the creative freedoms of the HBO brand and captured a cult audience with its passionate, blood-drenched visuals and stories.

This book considers the representations of sexuality, race and class in a series that engages directly with prejudice and civil rights. It also considers *True Blood*'s generic roots in television horror, paranormal romance and Southern Gothic, the wider contexts of fairy tales and religion, the marketing of the series and the activities of its fans. www.ibtaurism.com

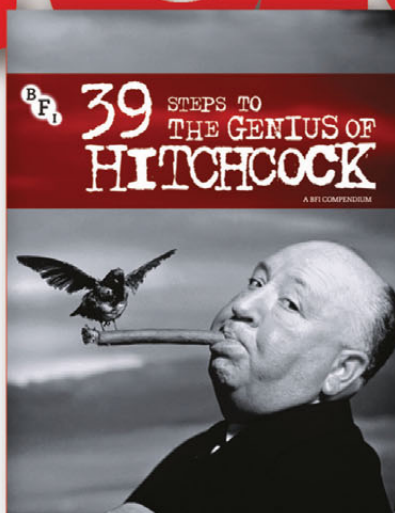


STUDYING FIGHT CLUB

By Mark Ramey, Auteur, paperback, 114pp, £9.99, ISBN 9781906733551

Fight Club is, on one level, a pop-culture phenomenon and, on another, a deeply philosophical and satirical exploration of modern life. David Fincher's film has had a huge impact, leading to spoofs, homage, merchandising and numerous internet fansites. Mark Ramey explores *Fight Club* in terms of the career of its director and key cast, and the film's journey from its beginnings as a controversial novel to its present incarnation as a cult film. He examines the film in terms of its broad cultural impact and continuing relevance, especially since 9/11, illustrating the multiple interpretations and discourses that the film gives rise to.

www.auteur.co.uk



39 STEPS TO THE GENIUS OF HITCHCOCK

A BFI Compendium

Edited by James Bell, BFI, 148pp, paperback, illustrated, £12 (plus p&p when bought online), ISBN 9781844575343

From his humble beginnings as a greengrocer's son in East London, Alfred Hitchcock rose to become the most famous and celebrated film director the world has ever known, his name a byword for cinematic suspense, excitement and innovation. Comprising 39 lavishly illustrated new essays by eminent critics, curators, historians and filmmakers, the first BFI Compendium offers a complete portrait of the man the world came to know as the 'master of suspense' and a fuller understanding of just what we mean when we describe something as 'Hitchcockian'.

Includes new writing from: Charles Barr, Patrick McGilligan, Laura Mulvey, Camille Paglia, David Thomson and Guillermo del Toro. Exclusively available from the BFI Filmstore, BFI Southbank, London (020 7815 1350) and online. www.bfi.org.uk/filmstore



SAW

By Benjamin Poole, Devil's Advocates series, Auteur, 116pp, paperback, £9.99, ISBN 9781906733568

Widely regarded as inaugurating the 'torture porn' movement, the original *SAW* is rather a more nuanced and subtle hybrid genre film than is generally acknowledged. Benjamin Poole considers the *SAW* phenomenon from multiple perspectives – from its generic pedigree in both literature and film, to the visceral audience pleasures of the text, to the film's implicit criticism of masculinity. Made and released in the wake of 9/11 – when America's confidence was shattered by attacks at home, only for its stock abroad to tumble amidst accusations of government-sanctioned torture in the execution of foreign policy – *SAW*, Poole argues, is a horror film that is entirely representative of the era in which it was made.

www.facebook.com/DevilsAdvocatesbooks



'The Wizard of Oz'

BFI FILM CLASSICS

Blade Runner/Citizen Kane/Il conformista/Don't Look Now/Metropolis/La Règle du jeu/Singin' in the Rain/Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs/Taxi Driver/Vertigo/The Wizard of Oz/Went the Day Well?

Various authors, BFI/Palgrave Macmillan, £10.99 each

By Edward Buscombe

In the 1980s David Meeker, then keeper of feature and fiction films for the National Film Archive (a division of the British Film Institute), became increasingly concerned about the problems in exhibiting good-quality 35mm prints of the great films of the past. Unless something was done, it would soon be difficult to see these films as they ought to be seen, projected in their original format onto a large screen. Accordingly he secured the support of the director of the BFI – at first Anthony Smith, then Wilf Stevenson – to strike new prints of classic films that would be shown regularly in repertory at the Museum of the Moving Image, part of the BFI's South Bank site.

It seemed to me, then working for BFI Publishing, under the aegis of the Education Division, that this project – essentially an educational one, enabling audiences to see the best of world cinema – would be greatly enhanced if some books were attached. Peter

Wollen, whose volume on *Singin' in the Rain* is one of the best of the Film Classics (and has just been reissued as one of a batch of 12 Film Classics to mark the 20th anniversary of the series), once said to me that you can't learn about cinema just by staring at films on a screen. You need to read as well – and how better to inform the public about what makes a film a classic than to write a book about it?

The problem was that David Meeker had drawn up a list of no fewer than 360 films. Was I seriously proposing the BFI publish a book about each one? My notion was to look for authors beyond academic scholars (the usual suspects). Not that I have anything against them, having been one myself, but I thought that if this series was to appeal to a wider audience and fulfil its educational mission, it would be good to have some authors who were not full-time professional writers about film. Novelists, playwrights, actors, politicians, film editors, television producers – all might bring something new to film writing. I knew that such people could never be persuaded to write a lengthy book. They had neither the time nor the inclination. But they might be tempted to write a short book – no more than a long essay – about their favourite movie. Twenty thousand words was set as the limit.

My boss at the BFI, Colin MacCabe, was an enthusiastic supporter from the beginning, but he rather took me aback when he insisted that I write one of the first volumes – “to see what the problems are”, he said ominously. I floundered somewhat, faced with Meeker's intimidatingly long and learned list. He had compiled it single-handed; it contained more than a few films I had never seen, and a few I was indifferent to. “You like westerns,” Colin said. “Pick one.” I chose *Stagecoach*, not because it's my favourite western – nor is John Wayne my favourite western star. But it seemed to raise interesting questions about what made a film a ‘classic’. It's a film in which much previous western filmmaking and storytelling are sedimented, but which also supplied the template for much of what was to come.

Colin also had the inspired idea of asking his friend Salman Rushdie to write one of the first volumes. Rushdie was at that time in hiding as a result of the Iranian fatwa; as his editor I could communicate with him only through his agent, having not the least idea (or desire to know!) where he was living. Rushdie surprised us all by picking *The Wizard of Oz* for his subject, though when I got the manuscript it was clearly a perfect choice. (Incidentally, in his new introduction to the second edition

of his Film Classic, Rushdie says there were voices in the BFI objecting to an association with him. If so, that's the first I ever heard of it.)

There was a strong case for including a British film initially. Penelope Houston, then editor of *Sight & Sound*, was an ideal choice as author, and her selection, *Went the Day Well?*, proved a happy one (it is also reissued this month). The fourth title in the first batch was *Double Indemnity*, by the film critic of *Time* magazine, Richard Schickel. I wanted a title that was generally known and popular. When I came to open my copy the other day, a xerox of a letter fell out, from director Billy Wilder to Schickel after he received the book: "My wife asked me what's that brochure you're reading? I told her, that's the best fucking book we have in our library!"

Brochures or not, the books were designed to be attractive, even collectable, with their different coloured spines. Andrew Barron, the designer, did an excellent job both inside and out, and we took a lot of trouble with the illustrations, making frame-stills from 35mm prints where possible. We also made rather a fetish out of providing the most complete credits possible, compiled by Markku Salmi of the BFI. For the next two or three years we published four titles at a time, two or three times a year, hurrying to achieve a critical mass for the series. I knew that as an enterprise it would stand or fall not on the success of any single title but as a project covering a variety of films by an attractively disparate group of writers. If some volumes had more appeal than others (some films in the list are obscure, even if undeservedly so), then overall things would balance out.

Up until that time there had been very few books published about individual films. There were plenty of auteur studies, genre studies, histories of film movements or national cinemas. But being restricted to a single title permitted the writer to focus in on detail – on really exploring what makes a movie work. I remember at the time being told by a colleague at the BFI that what was needed were more auteur studies, not books on single films. But in fact the Film Classics have by no means undermined the concept of the auteur – even if certain films, such as *Singin' in the Rain* and *Performance*, offered excellent opportunities to problematise the notion of a single author of a film.

Knowing that their film would be accessible – shown regularly in optimum conditions – gave the writer confidence that his or her work would be used to illuminate actual viewing, and tested against what was up on the screen. (Initially we commissioned only titles from the 360 list that the archive had already struck a print of; alas, that didn't last long, as the appetite of authors to write about great films outstripped the funds available for new prints.) Authors received only minimal guidance. Often I was asked, "What do you mean by a classic?" But it wasn't a question I ever answered, except by some vague prescription such as "a film that has stood the test of time". Each author should, I felt, work out for themselves what the term meant. I thought that some account of how the film got made was essential (and with some titles that's the most compelling part of the book). I wanted each author to explain why the film



'Went the Day Well?'

deserved classic status. And I was looking for a personal response; advocacy and enthusiasm were welcomed. Authors selected their own titles from the list; I don't think I ever proposed to anyone which film they should write about.

After a year or two it became clear that some of the authors we were keen to attract wanted to write about very recent films. Meeker's list cut off at 1981, with *Mad Max 2*. Was there to be no volume on *Blade Runner*? Or *Blue Velvet*? Or *Unforgiven*? It also has to be confessed that the original 360 list gets a little thin the closer it approaches the cut-off date. There's no place for *Don't Look Now* or *Last Tango in Paris* or *Easy Rider*. Accordingly in 1996 we initiated a parallel series, entitled BFI Modern Classics – an oxymoron, admittedly. In this new series, edited by Rob White (subsequently responsible for both series after I left the BFI), authors would not be constrained by a

The Classics have by no means undermined the concept of the auteur – even if 'Singin' in the Rain' problematised the notion of a single author of a film



'Singin' in the Rain'

pre-existing list nor by the date of release. All they had to do was persuade the publishers that their choice merited a volume.

Inevitably, as its momentum built, the series outgrew its original impulse. Financial constraints and the increasing problems of obtaining materials made it more and more difficult to assemble the corpus of prints first envisaged. And in the nearly 30 years since the 360 list was first compiled, cinema – and cinema appreciation – has changed a lot, and perhaps along with it our conception of what constitutes a classic. And so in 2007 the series was relaunched by amalgamating the two series into one and cutting it loose from its moorings in the 360 list. Now the list of films covered is dictated only by the willingness of the editor and her advisory board to take a title under their wing.

Some 160 titles are currently in print – a figure I never even dreamed of in 1992, although we haven't yet covered even half Meeker's list. If imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, then we should be pleased that other publishers have jumped on the bandwagon with their own collections of books on individual film titles. It's gratifying to see that 20 years on, a dozen Film Classics have just been issued in handsome new designs, including new volumes on *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, *Il conformista* (*The Conformist*) and *La Règle du jeu*, and reissues of some of the very first in the series (including Wollen's, Rushdie's and Houston's). And the series shows no sign of running out of steam.

Fourteen years ago *Sight & Sound* published a little booklet listing all of Meeker's 360 films, and compiled a list of the top ten films missing: no *Nashville*, *Persona*, *Point Blank*, *All About Eve*, *Au hasard Balthazar*, *Dance, Girl, Dance*, *Gone with the Wind*, *Rear Window* or *Xala*. To date, not one of these titles has been covered in BFI Film Classics, so there's still plenty of work to be done!



Edward Buscombe joins a panel for the 'Call it a Classic?' discussion event at BFI Southbank, London on 3 September



The power of montage: in 'Night and Fog' Alain Resnais uses concentration-camp footage from a variety of sources, shot by the Germans and the Allies

CONCENTRATIONARY CINEMA

Aesthetics as Political Resistance in Alain Resnais's *Night and Fog*

Edited by Griselda Pollock and Max Silverman, Berghahn, 272pp, £55, ISBN 9780857453518

Reviewed by Sue Vice

Alain Resnais's 1955 film *Night and Fog* is often seen as a flawed classic. Although its portrayal of Nazi atrocities using contemporary imagery is viscerally shocking, Jean Cayrol's script barely mentions the Nazis' Jewish or Roma and Sinti victims; the film confronts the viewer with unidentified imagery, much of which originates with the Nazis themselves and thus risks reproducing their viewpoint; and it presents ethically dubious images of the dead and dying.

In this excellent volume of essays, each of these truisms about Resnais's film is challenged. In their introduction, Griselda Pollock and Max Silverman argue that it is a conceptual error to see *Night and Fog* as a Holocaust film *manqué* since it is not about the process of extermination that took place in occupied Poland. Rather, the film attempts to portray a different reality, that of "*l'univers concentrationnaire*", in the phrase of former Buchenwald prisoner David Rousset. *Night and Fog*'s concern is with the network of over 10,000 concentration camps for political prisoners that sprang up throughout Germany after the Nazis came to power in 1933, in an extreme example of how any totalitarian state aims to combat resistance, establish a climate of terror and demolish the individuality of the dissident.

Resnais's use of montage has a political as well as an aesthetic function. As several contributors to this volume argue, its sometimes disorientating effect depends precisely on the varied provenance of the material, which includes Resnais's own footage, sequences from such films as Wanda Jakubowska's fictional *The Last Stage* and Leni Riefenstahl's propagandistic *Triumph of the Will*, alongside photographs taken secretly by Sonderkommando prisoners at Auschwitz, and film shot by the SS and by the Allied liberation forces. Libby Saxton analyses the montage's creation of what she calls the "concentrationary gaze", a compromised look that may establish complicity with

'Night and Fog' attempts to portray a different reality, that of 'l'univers concentrationnaire', in the phrase of a former Buchenwald prisoner



the executioners as well as identification with their victims to shock the spectator out of complacency. The images of denatured bodies that Resnais includes are not present simply to horrify. Rather, as Emma Wilson claims, the difficulty of telling whether we are looking at moving film or still photographs of those who lie motionlessly on the brink of death provokes "grief" in the viewer, who wishes "for animation or familiarity in these desolate and desecrated images".

Resnais himself declared that *Night and Fog* was "all about Algeria", and contributors to this volume trace provocative comparisons with other films on racialised violence, such as Haile Gerima's *Sankofa* (about African resistance to slavery) and – disturbingly closer to home – on the "concentrationary" in Michael Winterbottom and Mat Whitecross's *The Road to Guantanamo*. The montage effect extends to the essays themselves, which debate by juxtaposition such questions as the literal versus symbolic meaning of the film's title. At times the contributors' urge to see the imagery in purely cinematic terms may appear to overlook its horrifying content; and Hanns Eisler's score gets rather short shrift, although Sylvie Lindeperg interestingly points out that it includes a deformed version of the German national anthem accompanying footage of Jews being deported to Auschwitz from Westerbork.

But overall this is an outstanding anthology, which has justly been awarded the prize for 'Best Moving Image Book' in the 2012 Kraszna-Krausz Book Awards. It will send the reader back to the film's conclusion, where a close-up of the crematorium ruins at Birkenau reminds us that – in the words of the voiceover – we deafen ourselves to the "endless cry" of the victims of state violence at our peril.

SCREEN DYNAMICS

Mapping the Borders of Cinema

Edited by Gertrud Koch, Volker Pantenburg
& Simon Rothöhler, Austrian Film Museum/
Synema Publications, 184pp, £20.50,
ISBN 9783901644399

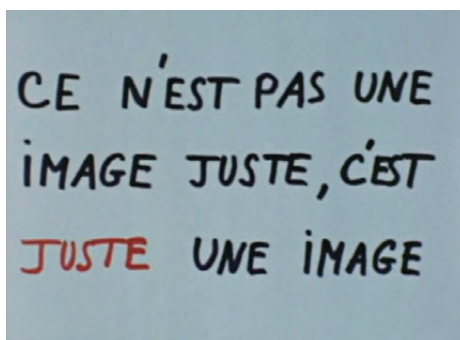
Reviewed by Nick Roddick

It looks like Jean-Luc Godard may once again have been right about the future of cinema when he inserted the famous caption “*Ce n’est pas une image juste, c’est juste une image*” (“it’s not a true image, it’s just an image”) into his film *Vent d’est* (1970). But while Godard was concerned with the need to demystify the image, his phrase now seems especially prescient in the world of cultural criticism, where the digital revolution has knocked a hole in André Bazin’s ‘ontology of the photographic image’. Nowadays, film images are indeed ‘just’ images. What was once a mechanical, indexical, objective record of someone or something that had once stood in front of the lens (*objectif* in French) is now a coded – and thus highly mediated – collection of 1s and 0s equally at home on an IMAX screen, a TV, a computer or a mobile phone.

This has resulted in what film academic Janet Harbord calls a “disorientation, perhaps a momentary vertigo” in film studies. Well, that vertigo – to judge by the essays contained in this meaty, two columns-per-page volume – seems to be shading into panic. The old words no longer work. Less and less do we see our films in a ‘cinema’; rarely are they distributed on ‘film’. Interestingly, however, most of the contributors to this volume – while pointing out the problem – continue to use these words, there being as yet no others.

Jonathan Rosenbaum, one of the few ‘old-school’ critics positively to welcome the new digital world, offers a ‘goodbye to all that’ memoir about the family movie theatre in Florence, Alabama. Raymond Bellour, by contrast, devotes 25 dense columns to saying, basically, that he still thinks films should be seen in a cinema. There are also musings on Max Ophüls, a consideration of film images in stage shows, and an excellent essay by Simon Rothöhler on Michael Mann’s use of digital cameras in *Collateral*, *Miami Vice* and *Public Enemies*.

As many contributors point out, it is no longer a question of Bazin’s ‘What is Cinema?’ or its auteurist successor ‘When is Cinema?’, but ‘Where is Cinema?’ Asking more questions than they answer, different contributors tackle different aspects of this problem, calling on Heidegger, Deleuze, Merleau-Ponty and others for help. But light comes at the end of this long phenomenological tunnel in the very last essay, ‘Moving Images on Portable Devices’, by cultural critic Ekkehard Knörer. In a brief and lucid survey which should be required reading on all film courses, Knörer notes that the general public has much less trouble getting its head around the implications of the brave new digital world, happily transforming its economic, social and cultural habits, just as viewers have done at every other turning-point (sound, colour, the advent of TV) in the technological history of cinema – and happy,



Just an image: the caption from ‘Vent d’est’

too, to keep the old words for as long as they will serve, even if they are no longer ‘index’ linked.

“Every change and innovation has to be implemented and thereby appropriated by individuals and society,” writes Knörer. “Watching movies in the digital age has to and will become part of practices and discourses that make sense of it.” Amen to that: we’ll find the new words soon enough. And I for one won’t be sorry to see the back of some of the old ones clogging up this otherwise excellent book.

THE HOLLYWOOD SIGN

By Leo Braudy, Yale University Press, 215pp,
£10.99, ISBN 9780300181456

Reviewed by Philip Kemp

Braudy’s witty, allusive study forms part of Yale University Press’s Icons of America series; other entries to date include Superman, Andy Warhol and the hamburger. Since 11 white block-capital letters, even ones standing 45 feet high, offer relatively little scope for aesthetic or mythological

exegesis, Braudy uses the famous sign – its prehistory, erection, deterioration, refurbishment and eventual reconstruction – as a framework on which to string the history of Hollywood itself: the world’s premier dream factory, whose fluctuating fortunes often shadowed those of the sign.

Originally the sign had nothing to do with the movie colony. Erected in 1923 by property developer Harry Chandler, for the first 26 years of its existence it read ‘HOLLYWOODLAND’ and advertised an upmarket housing development. Its arrival coincided with the period when the film industry – previously regarded with some disdain by respectable LA society as (in Braudy’s words) “lower class in origin and audience, dispensing cheap entertainment and low-brow antics” – was trying to acquire a patina of social decorum. “By the early 1920s,” he notes, “pompous splendor was in the air.”

In 1931 a British-born starlet, Peg Entwistle, notoriously jumped to her death from the H of the sign (though Braudy has his doubts about elements of this story). Over the decades the sign has been mocked, ignored, shorn of its ‘LAND’, unofficially modified (in 1976 a CalState student marked the partial decriminalisation of marijuana by altering it to read HOLLYWEED), revived, celebrated and now, under the protection of the city, enshrined as an official icon of Los Angeles.

In the end, Braudy suggests, LA and the Hollywood sign are well matched. “The Nowhere City”, as Alison Lurie famously termed it, and the icon that can mean what anyone wants it to mean mirror each other uncannily well. “The Hollywood sign,” Braudy concludes, “remains the prime visual center for a famously amorphous city and industry... an imperfect version of its larger meaning, always aspiring, never quite there.”



Sign of the times: the ‘Hollywoodland’ sign, before it lost its last four letters

THE 32ND CAMBRIDGE FILM FESTIVAL

13-23 SEPTEMBER 2012

Find out everything you need to know, sign up to our newsletter & register for a free printed programme at

www.cambridgefilmfestival.org.uk

Photo © Tom Catchside

CAMBRIDGE
32ND
FILM
FESTIVAL

TWITTER @camfilmfest

FACEBOOK.COM/cambridgefilmfestival

FUNDED BY

creative
england

SPONSORS



TTP GROUP

Studio24

SELECTED HIGHLIGHTS

ON THE ROAD • **NEW GERMAN**

CINEMA INCLUDING **BARBARA, FORMENTERA**

AND **THE BIG EDEN** • **HITCHCOCK REVISITED**

FROM **THE PLEASURE GARDEN** TO **MARNIE**

• **CATALAN CINEMA** • **THE SNOWS OF**

KILIMANJARO PLUS DIRECTOR ROBERT GUÉDIGUIAN

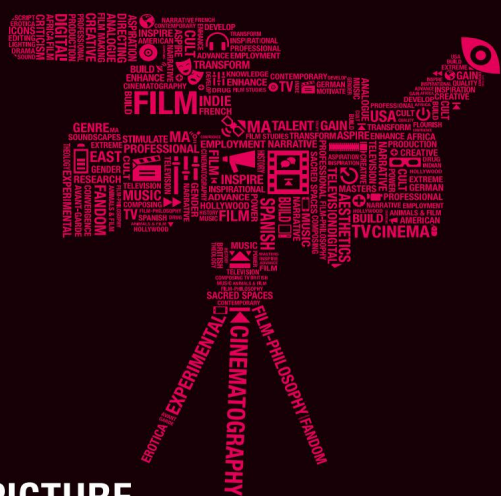
• **CHASING ICE** • ALSO **OPEN-AIR SCREENINGS**

IN AUGUST & SEPTEMBER INCLUDING **MOVIES ON**

GRANTCHESTER MEADOWS • **HOLY MOTORS** • AND

NEW SUBMISSIONS: SHORTS, DOCS, FEATURES

Kingston
University
London



A COMPLETE PICTURE. **FILM@KINGSTON**

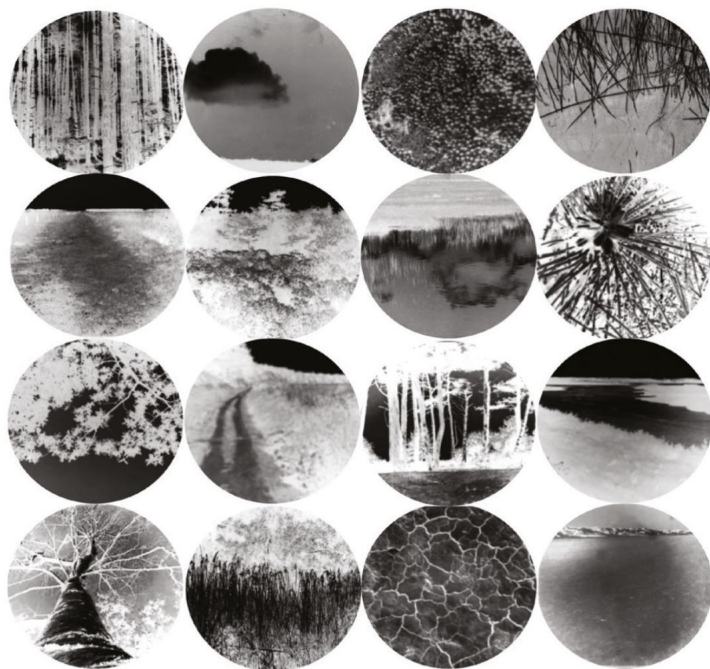
Whether your interest is in the theory and analysis of contemporary film, or you relish a more practical involvement with this powerful medium, we have a postgraduate course for you.

The Film Studies MA enables you to focus on the academic investigation of film and its many genres, whilst the film making MA offers you the opportunity to make your own films, direct your future and create your own perfect ending.

Full and part-time options start in September 2012.

www.kingston.ac.uk/fassfilm

■ FACULTY OF ARTS & SOCIAL SCIENCES



MA Degree Show 2012

Exhibition opens to the public Friday 31 August - Tuesday 4 September, 10 - 4pm.
Closed Sunday. St Georges Building and The Gallery at NUCA, St Georges Street,
Norwich, NR3 1BB.

www.nuca.ac.uk/madegreeeshow

MA Communication Design

MA Curation

MA Fashion

MA Fine Art

MA Moving Image and Sound

MA Textile Design



LEARN FILMMAKING & ACTING FOR FILM



NEW YORK FILM ACADEMY

SCHOOL OF FILM & ACTING

The Most Hands-on Intensive Programs in the World

16mm • 35mm • Hi-Def • **RED EPIC®** • Super 16mm • HD SLR

+1-212-674-4300 | WWW.NYFA.EDU

**ONE & TWO-YEAR CONSERVATORY • TWO-YEAR ASSOCIATE OF FINE ARTS
BACHELOR OF FINE ARTS • MASTER OF FINE ARTS**

SHORT-TERM HANDS-ON INTENSIVE TOTAL IMMERSION WORKSHOPS ALSO AVAILABLE YEAR-ROUND

**NEW YORK CITY • UNIVERSAL STUDIOS, CALIFORNIA • ABU DHABI, UAE • AUSTRALIA • FLORENCE
HARVARD UNIVERSITY* • DISNEY STUDIOS* • PARIS* • JAPAN* • KOREA* • CHINA* • INDIA** *SUMMER ONLY

All credits and degrees are solely granted by the New York Film Academy California. All degree programs take place on the backlot of Universal Studios, Hollywood. All workshops are solely owned and operated by the New York Film Academy and such workshops are not affiliated with Universal Studios, Harvard University, or Disney Studios.

THE THIRD MAN



How to end a film well is a difficult art. This new series examines cinema's most moving or ingenious finales, beginning with Carol Reed's *The Third Man*

By Nick James

In a discussion last year on screenwriting, David Hare suggested that Hollywood's filmmakers and development people put too much creative effort into the opening scenes of films, to the detriment of their outcomes. If a story-based film is really strong, part of us wants it never to end – unless, that is, there's a restitution we desperately want to see. That's why we often feel during the 'last reel' as if we're holding off a letdown. You can sense, too, the reluctance of some screenwriters to drag their tale to a finish that seems all too obvious to their better selves – which is perhaps why inappropriate ideas that try our credulity get tacked on. These are some of the reasons why a film that may have touched greatness can then seem to dwindle rather than leaving us stunned that it's all over. It's also surprising how often endings feel as if they're from a different film. All of these difficulties make a regular item on great film endings irresistible to us.

In one single long-shot, the ending of

The Third Man (1949) pays off the moral ambivalence writer Graham Greene, director Carol Reed and actor Orson Welles have encouraged us to feel towards Harry Lime, the supposedly deceased American racketeer in Vienna whose true nature is the film's central mystery. Greene's famous suggestion (which smacks of impossible foreknowledge that his sometime MI6 friend Kim Philby was a spy for the Russians) was that the loyalty you owe to a friend is more important than any you owe to an ideology or nation state. That's why this final scene centres on Holly Martins (Joseph Cotten), the film's 'dummy' protagonist (rather than Lime, the real one). Martins is a sentimentalist writer of western 'cheap novelettes' who has protested his great friendship for Lime throughout the film, only to be persuaded at the last to betray him because of the terrible suffering he's inflicted.

The scene takes place at the huge Zentralfriedhof cemetery, where Lime has just been buried for the second, more certain time. With the ceremony over, Major

Is the finale of 'The Third Man' the greatest in all cinema? I'd say (in this 'Greatest Films' issue) it must be a candidate

Calloway (Trevor Howard) offers Martins a lift to the airport in his British army jeep. They pass Lime's former lover Anna (Alida Valli), a fatalistic Czech actress who remained loyal to Lime despite his leading her (and the world) to believe he was dead (hence the first burial). She's walking down the bleak, seemingly endless, tree-lined avenue. Her false papers have been seized by the Russians, who will almost certainly send her back to Czechoslovakia, probably to some kind of gulag.

"Can't you do something about Anna?" Martins asks.

"I'll do what I can, if she'll let me," says Calloway.

There's a close-up of Martins in profile turning as Anna recedes into the distance. Then he pleads with Calloway to be dropped off. Martins gets out of the jeep and walks over to lean against a cart full of logs, while Anna grows larger out of the mid-avenue vanishing-point and the famous zither music swells...

Is the finale of *The Third Man* the greatest in all cinema? I'd say (in this 'Greatest Films' issue) it must be a candidate, if only for its visual simplicity and the elegant way one kind of romanticism is trumped by another. For Martins is waiting for the boy-and-girl-find-solace-together ending. But after several seconds of anticipation, Anna walks on by, refusing even to acknowledge this traitor to her purer love.



NEW RELEASES

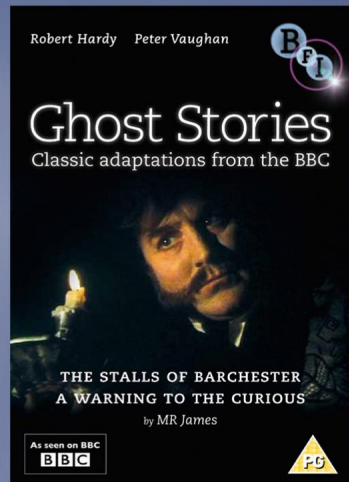


GHOST STORIES:
WHISTLE AND I'LL COME TO YOU
(1968+2010 VERSIONS)

OUT 20 AUGUST

Includes Jonathan Miller's legendary 1968 adaptation starring Michael Hordern, and the 2010 version starring John Hurt.

DVD



GHOST STORIES:
THE STALLS OF BARCHESTER (1971)
A WARNING TO THE CURIOUS (1972)

OUT 20 AUGUST

Two more chilling MR James adaptations – hugely sought-after and finally available on DVD.

DVD

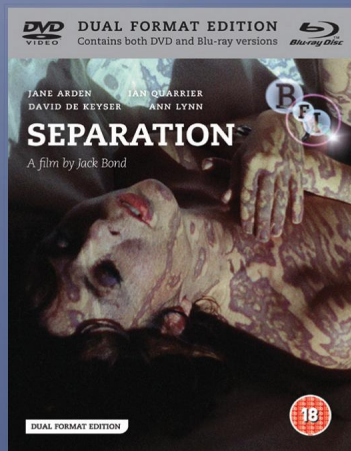


COI: MISINFORMATION

OUT 13 AUGUST

Unique collaboration which sees COI's archive of Public Information films re-scored by cutting edge sound makers Mordant Music.

DVD

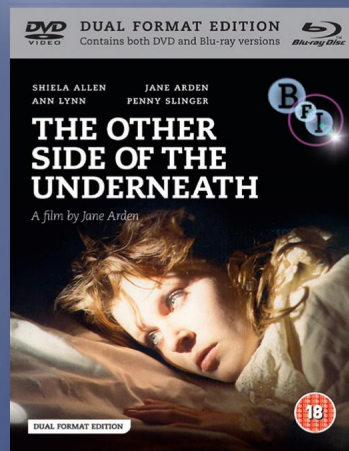


SEPARATION

OUT 13 AUGUST

Jack Bond's stylish and intriguing 1967 film, written by and starring Jane Arden.

DUAL FORMAT EDITION

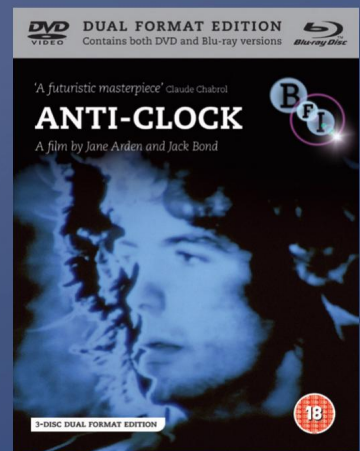


THE OTHER SIDE OF THE UNDERNEATH

OUT 13 AUGUST

Jane Arden's violent and powerful 1972 adaptation of her work with The Holocaust women's theatre troupe.

DUAL FORMAT EDITION



ANTI-CLOCK

OUT 13 AUGUST

Jane Arden and Jack Bond's 1979 experiment is a film of authentic, startling originality.

DUAL FORMAT EDITION



**"THE MOST ENJOYABLE AND CREATIVELY AMBITIOUS FILM I'VE SEEN HERE THIS YEAR.
IT'S SIMPLY GLORIOUS - GIDDY AND PULSE-QUICKENING ...SWOONINGLY ROMANTIC"**

TIM ROBEY, THE DAILY TELEGRAPH
(BERLIN FILM FESTIVAL)

**"THIS SLEIGHT-OF-HAND CARD GAME
OF A FILM WAS EASILY THE
BERLIN FESTIVAL'S BEST"**

NICK JAMES, THE OBSERVER

**"A FILM OF BLISSFUL, LIFE-AFFIRMING MOMENTS...
AN ENCHANTING, HARROWING AND HILARIOUS
MELODRAMA ABOUT MEMORY AND CINEMA"**

DAVID JENKINS, LITTLE WHITE LIES

**"TABU PROMPTED SOMETHING
APPROACHING A COLLECTIVE SWOON
AT ITS WORLD PREMIERE"**

DENNIS LIM, THE NEW YORK TIMES



BERLIN
INTERNATIONAL
FILM FESTIVAL 2012
IN COMPETITION



"THIS LOVELY BLACK-AND-WHITE DIPTYCH OF LOVE AND LOSS"

TREVOR JOHNSTON, TIME OUT



CINEVUE



TABU

15



VIEW LONDON



A FILM BY MIGUEL GOMES

 **new wave films**
A NEW WAVE FILMS RELEASE

IN CINEMAS 7 SEPTEMBER

MEDIA
www.newwavefilms.co.uk